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RYBKIN ON ANALYZING THE SOCIAL CHARACTER OF WARS AFTER WW II

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 1, Jan 82 (signed to press 25 Dec 81) pp 3-10

[Article by Honored Scientist of the RSFSR, Professor and Doctor of Philosophical Sciences Col Ye. Rybkin: "The Importance of Leninist Methodology for Analyzing the Social Character of Wars of the Postwar Period." Passages printed in boldface in source are enclosed in slantlines.]

[Text] Thanks to the titanic efforts of the Communist Party and Soviet government our people have had an opportunity to engage quietly in creative labor for over 36 years now since World War II. The Peace Program elaborated by the 24th party congress and further developed at the 25th and 26th congresses has been and remains a reliable compass in the struggle for a drastic normalization of the international situation. As stated in the Report by CPSU CC General Secretary, Comrade L. I. Brezhnev, "the Soviet Union and its allies now more than ever before are the chief support of peace on earth."¹

Meanwhile, the state of the world during these years was far from serene. By virtue of the aggressive character of imperialism--the main source of wars--local wars which at times were rather lengthy and bloody (such as in Korea and Vietnam) have been waged almost continuously on the globe. At the borderline of the 1980's U.S. ruling circles headed by the Carter and Reagan administrations sharply stepped up the aggressiveness of American foreign policy, setting a course aimed at undermining detente and aggravating the international situation, and unfolding open preparations for nuclear war. Militant imperialism assigns an important role to local wars in attaining its goals. The study of such wars is of enormous political significance since, as it is generally known, small wars either "finish" what a world (or other major) war did not complete or they precede, as it were, and prepare for a new war, acting at times as the detonator of a world explosion. Therefore a study of the history of such wars is important for forecasting and working out measures to prevent them from developing into a world nuclear conflict.

/Basic Principles of the Leninist Methodology of Studying the Social Character of Wars/

We take the /social character of war/ to mean its political content determined by the historic direction in the activities of the classes waging it and by the aggregate of those real, objectively functioning goals which direct the war. The social character, historic place and direction of a war

are determined by "/what politics/ the war is continuing . . . and /what class/ is waging the war for what purposes."² Therefore "it is necessary to determine the political content in each specific instance, for each war in particular."³

In evaluating the social character of war and further developing the lines of K. Marx and F. Engels, V. I. Lenin demanded that one proceed from the assumption that war is a continuation of the politics of classes, nations and states by means of armed violence. The character of wars is determined by the politics of the belligerents long before a war begins and so is subject to relatively accurate forecasting.

Wars are subdivided into just (progressive) and unjust (reactionary) wars based on their social or social-political (which is considered identical) character. The social character is determined for each side individually, since one and the same war most often is just from one side and unjust from another. For example, in the period 1936-1939 the Spanish Republicans were fighting for a more progressive social system, while the opposing side, the Forces of Franco, represented a counterrevolutionary force. History also knows many mutually unjust wars, including World War I (1914-1918), the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905) and others. There are no wars which are just on both sides.

In analyzing the social character of wars V. I. Lenin followed the general requirements of Marxist methodology, interpreted from the specific viewpoint of military-social research. For example, the materialistic approach was expressed in his revelation of the most profound causes of wars--their economic basis rooted in capitalism's production relationships. V. I. Lenin wrote that "war is not a contradiction of the principles of private ownership, but a direct and inevitable development of these principles."⁴

/The economic position of the class waging a war also determines the character of politics embodied in it and shaping its make-up and historic importance./ And so in revealing the reactionary character of World War I, V. I. Lenin proceeded above all from the economic analysis of imperialism.

Both imperialism of the early 20th century and modern-day imperialism generates and conducts unjust wars by its social-economic nature.

Proceeding from a recognition of the decisive importance of material foundations of social life in the development and functioning of social phenomena, Marxism-Leninism also points out the important role /of nonmaterial factors, which/ never can be written off. Society's nonmaterial life and social awareness (and in case of war, the ideas, slogans and programs for which the struggle is waged) are a reflection of the existence of the class producing this nonmaterial product. "Social awareness," says Lenin "/reflects/ social being--this is the essence of Marx's teaching."⁵

A certain ideology also corresponds to the social character of wars. Imperialist wars are characterized by the ideology of militarism which justifies them, and just, liberating wars are characterized by a revolutionary and progressive-patriotic ideology.

And so, in describing the make-up of nonmaterial life of peoples of the countries participating in World War I, Lenin noted the unprecedented raging of militaristic, national-chauvinistic and pseudopatriotic propaganda. The Civil War of the peoples of Russia against internal and external reaction in 1918-1920 generated an upsurge of the peoples' revolutionary and patriotic awareness.

A reactionary, unjust war gives rise to antiwar movements of the popular masses. Antiwar sentiments are a definite sign of its unpopularity, i.e., its unjust, reactionary character. That was the case in states participating in World War I and in countries of the Hitler bloc in World War II.

Lenin demanded that any war be studied and evaluated /in close connection with the historic era in which it matures and takes place./ In analyzing wars he made broad use of the principle of a dialectical-materialistic analysis of wars: objectivity, comprehensiveness, concreteness, and an examination of the processes in their development, their contradictions, transfer from one state to another and so on.

For example, in emphasizing the need for an objective, accurate analysis of the social character of war, Lenin demanded that it be evaluated not abstractly and not in isolation from a given era, but only against the background of the era. He taught that "a given war cannot be understood without understanding the era."⁶ He pointed out that war must be placed "in that historic situation in which it occurs, and only then is it possible to determine one's attitude toward it."⁷ Vladimir Il'ich emphasized that one cannot always judge a war from the slogans which are advanced as its goals; accuracy of an evaluation is determined by how objectively it contributes to society's development. Only in this case can it be deemed to be progressive and "/in this sense/ lawful, just and so on."⁸

In studying wars, V. I. Lenin invariably was guided by principles /of a comprehensive analysis of events, their development, and disclosure of contradictions within phenomena./ It is especially important to dwell on this in view of the fact that wars must be examined in connection with the evolution and change of eras in the development of mankind and with a change in their character, and one has to consider all contradictory processes within the framework of the eras themselves.

For example, in the early 20th century the opinion existed among leftist social democrats that no wars were possible under imperialism except mutually unjust, predatory wars. V. I. Lenin subjected the social relationships of the era to a thorough study and revealed their contradictions to prove that just, liberating wars not only were possible, but were inevitable in this era as well.

In his work "Military Program of the Proletarian Revolution," Lenin wrote: "Theoretically it would be absolutely erroneous to forget that any war is only a continuation of politics by other means. The present imperialist war is a continuation of imperialist politics of two groups of great powers, and these politics originated and were nourished by the aggregate of relations of

the imperialist era. But of necessity that same era also must generate and nourish the politics of struggle against national oppression and the proletariat's struggle against the bourgeoisie, and so there is both the possibility and inevitability first of all of revolutionary national uprisings and wars; secondly, of wars and uprisings of the proletariat /against/ the bourgeoisie; thirdly, a unification of both kinds of revolutionary wars, and so on."⁹

In many works of the World War I period Lenin points out the real possibilities /of a change in the character of war/ by virtue of a change in the relative strength of warring powers and their internal evolution. In the work entitled "On the Yunius Pamphlet," he writes that "national wars, even victorious ones, are fully possible under condition of great exhaustion of the 'great' powers in a given war /or/ (my emphasis--Ye. R.) under condition of victory of the revolution in Russia."¹⁰ Lenin fully assumed the development of an unjust war into a war of liberation on the part of peoples of viable bourgeois European states defeated in a war,¹¹ which was confirmed by the experience of World War II. He also gave attention /to war's effect on society both during the war and at its conclusion / and noted the contradictory and active mechanism of this effect and its dependence on the character of war.

One must bear in mind here at least three points. Above all, the fact that /any/ belligerent realizes his goals in practice (goals oftentimes previously concealed) by winning victory and in the process the true social character of the war is revealed. Lenin adheres to this idea in evaluating the predatory essence of the Versailles and Brest-Litovsk treaties. The second point consists of the unique, spontaneous effect of war on society. /Any/ war overstrains society's forces and aggravates and reveals contradictions. A growing, healthy society conducting a just war and a reactionary system fighting for the purpose of seizures, pillaging or strengthening the power of the class losing its strength endure the burdens of war in different ways. And thirdly, /any/ war carries grief, death, losses and devastation. Proletarian ideology condemns violence and always acts in its ideal against bloodshed. But one must make sacrifices in a just war if it is impossible to get by without it.

In a number of works Lenin also notes the fact that imperialist unjust wars always are accompanied by unheard of /atrocities, piracy and violence/ not only toward prisoners of war, but toward the peaceful population as well. The Hitlerites, who consciously planned the destruction of entire nations, distinguished themselves in particular in this respect. Contemporary militant imperialists are ready to plunge mankind into the flame of thermonuclear war for their own selfish interests. They calculate ahead of time with unprecedented cynicism and coldbloodedness how many millions or perhaps even billions of people will perish in it.

/Basic Features of the Social Character of Modern Wars/

The postwar period above all was marked by a profound change in the strength of opposing systems--capitalism and socialism--in favor of the latter. The destructive trends were reinforced in the camp of capital, but at the same time there also was an increase in the strength of opposition of imperialist

countries and their accomplices to all liberating movements in the world. CPSU CC General Secretary Comrade L. I. Brezhnev remarked at the 26th congress: "The politics of aggressive imperialist forces already have led to a considerable growth in international tension with all dangerous consequences stemming therefrom."¹² Imperialism, and American imperialism above all, is the main source of military danger in the modern world. A new source of military danger--Maoist China with its hegemonic aspirations--has appeared in the international arena in recent years. The threat on its part is real only for the fact that world imperialism exists and the Peking leadership of the KNR [People's Republic of China] is joining with its most aggressive forces.

Types of wars differ in the character of contradictions on which they are based. Lenin revealed the system of types and kinds of wars of the modern era. A description of it is given in a number of special works.¹³

Therefore we only give the reminder that in the new era the typical wars are those between imperialist and socialist states (or coalitions of states); civil wars; and wars between imperialist countries. Wars also have become more frequent among liberated countries, although they do not represent some kind of uniform or special type.

With regard to wars of the first type mentioned, no problems exist for Marxist-Leninist theory in determining the social character on either side. Opposition between imperialism and socialism is an expression of the main contradiction of the era. Represented at one pole is the main force of the reaction--imperialism--and at the other pole the main force of progress--socialism. Initiative for unleashing coalition wars against the USSR already has come from imperialism twice, in 1918 and 1941; for major local wars against other socialist states twice (Korea in 1950 and Vietnam in 1964); and for a number of regional conflicts with the USSR, such as in 1938 (Khasan) and 1939 (Khalkhin-Gol). Wars in defense of the socialist homeland against the imperialists always are just, and wars on the part of the imperialists are the most reactionary.

Wars between imperialist-colonizers and peoples struggling for national independence have been the most widespread wars of the postwar period. On the general plane their social character causes no serious problems for Marxists. As a historical pattern, these wars on the part of oppressed peoples or peoples defending independence already gained unquestionably are just and progressive, but on the part of the imperialist-colonizers they are unjust and reactionary and, in the final account (with any variations in goals), they are predatory.

National liberation wars assuredly are characterized by a just content for practically the entire extent of the period in question. At the same time, in evaluating the social character of such wars, we must consider two extremely important circumstances. The first was noted long ago by our military philosophers and historians. It consists of the fact that /a change in the historic types of wars in the former colonial world/ occurred in the postwar period. The typical wars of colonies for liberation from the power of parent states were replaced by wars of imperialist-neocolonialists and

their accomplices (Israel, Republic of South Africa and so on) against already liberated young developing states. In a number of works Lenin touches on the question of opposition which arises between the liberated countries of the East and the imperialist West. The first such acts in the post-war period were the French aggression against Indochina in 1946-1954 and the Anglo-Dutch aggression against Indonesia in 1948-1949. Later similar acts took on new scope and specific forms. It was either direct aggression by neocolonialists (as against Egypt in 1956, Jordan and Lebanon in 1958, the Dominican Republic in 1963 and so on), or aggression was carried out by henchmen of imperialist powers--Israel, Republic of South Africa, Pakistan, or Thailand--against other states.

The replacement in the historic arena of one type of wars by another type between /the very same/ belligerents should be the subject of research by Soviet military historians. The question of the social character of modern wars between liberated and imperialist countries acquires very great importance in our time, since they comprise a necessary link in the world revolutionary process.

The modern era posed with all acuteness the question of /the ratio of national and international (revolutionary-socialist) content/ in all social processes. In works on the question of nationalities Lenin emphasized that Marxist revolutionaries support national movements until and insofar as the latter do not contradict interests of the socialist movement and proletarian revolution.

This must not be forgotten in any case while studying the ever-growing number of wars among liberated countries. The opinion existing in many journalistic works that /all/ wars between liberated countries are unleashed or inspired by imperialists is not quite correct. Unfortunately many of these wars have their internal causes which imperialism takes advantage of only later. This is explained by the fact that major national bourgeoisie and in places even petty bourgeoisie has assumed leadership of a number of liberated countries. It is the local predatory appetites which push some states (for example, Somalia against Ethiopia, Pakistan against India and so on) toward unjust wars, which force the other side to a retaliatory, sometimes just war (Ethiopia against Somalia) or to a mutually unjust war (the conflict between Morocco and Mauritania over the former Spanish Sahara). Such wars sometimes acquire a pernicious character for both parties, such as the Iran-Iraq fratricidal war, which plays into the hands of the imperialists.

The character of wars between liberated states is for the most part complicated and contradictory and often does not permit giving the war a simple appraisal. One of the reasons for such wars, as in Africa for example, is the /artificial nature of boundaries/ between states, which formed as a result of a past partition of colonies and remained when they were granted independence. In the majority of cases the boundaries do not correspond to ethnic, cultural and economic ties of the nations being formed. This is the bone of contention left by the imperialists. The second extremely important reason is the difference in directions of development of liberated states. Some of them have taken the path of socialist development (Vietnam, Laos,

Kampuchea) and conduct a peaceloving foreign policy. The imperialists and hegemonists wage a most active struggle against them. Another group of countries, which retained capitalist foundations, also does not show aggressive aspirations (India, Mexico, Panama, Zaire, the Dominican Republic and so on). Moreover, these states themselves at times become the object of aggression. Still other states follow the channel of imperialist politics (Israel, Egypt, Pakistan, Thailand, Oman and so on).

States /of a socialist orientation/ (Algeria, Angola, Libya, Syria, the People's Democratic Republic of South Yemen, Ethiopia) make up a rather large group. They are constant objects of attack or military blackmail both by imperialists and their proteges.

Finally we see instances of the departure of a number of countries from the socialist path of development. This usually shoves them onto the path of aggressions (by virtue of the domination of petty bourgeois chauvinistic ideology and psychology). That was the case in Somalia's attack on Ethiopia. This explains Maoist China's military actions against India and socialist Vietnam and its other militaristic, hegemonic acts.

An evaluation of wars in the motley and complex world of countries liberated from imperialism is a difficult and responsible matter. In providing this estimate, one has to consider Lenin's proposition that "wars are very motley, diverse, complex things. It is impossible to approach them with a common stereotype."¹⁵

In addition we must remember Lenin's well-known thesis that foreign policy is an indisputable continuation of domestic policy. Internal political changes in developing countries are unusually active, creating a situation of relative unpredictability. The turns and overthrows in domestic politics in these states often have a very serious effect on the international military-political situation as well, and this effect is contradictory.

Lenin wrote: "There is /not one/ phenomenon which could not be transformed into its opposite under certain conditions. A national war /can/ turn into an imperialist war and /vice versa/."¹⁶

In the postwar period there were a large number of civil wars which essentially do not represent a single type of war either in history in general or in our era inasmuch as their causes, motive forces and opposing classes within them differ. At the same time they have something in common which permits speaking of civil war as a special social phenomenon and about a relatively single type of wars. Lenin noted that "civil war is the most acute form of class struggle when, by repeating themselves, accumulating, expanding and becoming sharp, a number of economic and political clashes and battles reach the point where these clashes turn into a struggle of one class against another class with guns in hand."¹⁷

Thus civil war is an open clash which decides the question of power. The character of the power determines the social character of the war. It is possible to identify three subtypes of civil wars for modern times in

connection with this.¹⁷ This is /a civil war between the proletariat and bourgeoisie for power during a socialist revolution./ The civil wars in our country in 1918-1920 and in Hungary in 1919 were such wars. Such wars did not repeat themselves subsequently, right up until our days. The transition to socialism was accomplished by peaceful means in all countries which took the path of socialism. Armed violence cleared the path for revolution in its general democratic stage. That was the case in all European and Asiatic countries of people's democracy at the end of World War II, in China in 1946-1949, in Vietnam in 1946-1954 and in Cuba in 1956-1959. In addition, a multitude of other wars resulting in victory or failure flared up between the popular masses and fascism, monarchism and other forces of extreme reaction. We will mention merely the wars in Spain in 1936-1939, Greece in 1946-1949, Iraq in 1958, the Dominican Republic in 1962, the antifascist uprisings in Portugal in 1974, in Nicaragua in 1979 and now in El Salvador.

Consequently wars being waged within the framework of general democratic revolutions should be distinguished fundamentally from civil wars during a socialist revolution, since the strategy and tactics of the proletariat and its interaction with other classes in wars /different/ in their social character depend on this. Pointing out the possibility of such wars (there practically were none in the first two decades of the 20th century), Lenin wrote: "Wars are a continuation of politics; therefore since there is a struggle for democracy, a war also /is possible/ because of democracy..."¹⁹

There also are certain arguments in favor of identifying a third subtype of wars. The question is about /wars against feudal forces and tribalistic²⁰ opposition for national solidarity in liberated, developing countries./ The civil wars in Oman (from 1965), Nigeria (1967-1970) and others can be included among them. They are a clear anachronism for our times, connected with the belated entry onto an independent path of development by nations of former colonies not freed of the difficult heritage of past eras. But it is impossible to see their differences from civil wars of another social character. It follows that we have the right to identify if not a separate type, then at least a specific third variety (subtype) of modern civil wars.

The article has given only certain examples of the use of the Leninist methodology for studying modern wars. It would appear that they will give food for thought for military historians over the extensive material accumulated during the postwar period. The social character of a multitude of wars of this period is complex, active and contradictory.

With the appearance of the latest means of mass destruction local wars carry a special danger of easily causing a world war. In rebuking the overseas "hawks," who impose the idea of the suitability of a "limited" nuclear war on the world, CPSU CC Politburo Member and USSR Minister of Defense Mar SU D. F. Ustinov points out: "Only completely irresponsible people are capable of asserting that a nuclear war can be waged under some previously developed rules..."²¹

In the international arena the Soviet state has conducted a Leninist policy of peace consistently and firmly. Responding to a question by a PRAVDA correspondent, CPSU CC General Secretary, Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet Comrade L. I. Brezhnev said: "The thoughts and efforts of Soviet leaders, as well as the Soviet people as a whole, are aimed at preventing nuclear war entirely and eliminating the very threat of its outbreak."²² Such a USSR policy finds fervent support in all progressive mankind and this is a guarantee that the aggressors can be curbed, but all peaceloving forces have to be mobilized for this purpose.

FOOTNOTES

1. "Materialy XXVI s"yezda KPSS" [Materials of the 26th CPSU Congress], Moscow, Politizdat, 1981, p 4.
2. V. I. Lenin, "Polnoye sobraniye sochineniy" [Complete Collected Works], XXXIV, 196-197.
3. Ibid., XXX, 262.
4. Ibid., XXVI, 353.
5. Ibid., XVIII, 343.
6. Ibid., XLIX, 287.
7. Ibid., XXVI, 27.
8. Ibid., XXX, 82.
9. Ibid., pp 134-135.
10. Ibid., p 8.
11. See V. I. Lenin, "Polnoye sobraniye sochineniy," XXX, 6.
12. "Materialy XXVI s"yezda KPSS," p 26.
13. See "Marksistsko-leninskaya metodologiya voyennoy istorii" [Marxist-Leninist Methodology of Military History], Moscow, "Nauka," 1976, Chapter IX; "Filosofskoye naslediyе V. I. Lenina i problemy sovremennoy voyny" [Lenin's Philosophical Heritage and Problems of Modern War], Chapter II, Voenizdat, 1972; VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 4, 7 and others, 1980.
15. Lenin, XLIX, 369.
16. Ibid., XXX, 5.

17. Ibid., XXXIV, 215.
18. There is no uniform view on this question in our literature. The author of these lines has identified two types of civil war in a number of works (see for example "Voyna i politika v sovremennuyu epokhu" [War and Politics in the Modern Era], Voenizdat, 1973). The authors of the book "Marksizm-leninizm o voyne i armii" [Marxism-Leninism on War and the Army] (Voenizdat, 1969) point out two kinds within a single type, while authors of the book "Voyna i armiya" [War and the Army] (Voenizdat, 1977) do not mention varieties of this type at all.
19. Lenin, XXX, 85.
20. Tribalism is a striving for ethnic or tribal isolation and a separate political development.
21. PRAVDA, 25 July 1981.
22. Ibid., 21 October 1981.

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WARTIME OPERATIONS: THE BATTLE OF MOSCOW

The Artillery

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 1, Jan 82 (signed to press 25 Dec 81) pp 11-17

[Article, title as above, by Col Gen Arty M. Sidorov]

[Text] Soviet gunners earned unfading glory in the battle of Moscow. Together with rifle and armored troops and aviation, they courageously fought the fascist German invaders both in defense and in the offensive.

It should be noted that by the beginning of the defensive engagements most artillery units and subunits had not yet been completely armed and manned. Even in the Western Front, which had a relatively strong artillery grouping in comparison with the other fronts, the units and formations possessed 3,857 guns (including antiaircraft and antitank) and mortars. But if we consider that this number included 864 50-mm mortars, only about 3,000 guns and mortars could effectively fight enemy tanks. The average operational density of our artillery in armies of the Western Front was low, being 7.5 guns and mortars with calibers of 76 mm and higher, and 1.5 antitank guns and 0.7 antiaircraft guns per kilometer of front. The average operational densities of artillery were small in the Reserve and Bryansk fronts.

If we examine the overall weapons ratio, we would find that Army Group Center was significantly reinforced by the end of September 1941, possessing more than 14,000 guns and mortars and 1,700 tanks. It was supported by up to 1,390 airplanes. The opposing troops of the Western, Reserve and Bryansk fronts had only 7,600 guns and mortars, 990 tanks and 677 airplanes--that is, the enemy's superiority was a factor of 1.8 in artillery, 1.7 in tanks and 2 in airplanes.¹

Rocket launchers, which were effective weapons, were even in low supply among our troops at the beginning of the enemy's offensive.

Considering the evolved ratio of men and equipment in the Moscow strategic sector by the beginning of the battle of Moscow, the Supreme High Command General Headquarters took a number of steps aimed at reinforcing the artillery groupings. Prior

to the beginning of combat activities 75 artillery regiments of the RVGK [Supreme High Command Reserve] were regrouped in the Moscow sector. Of these, 34 artillery regiments were given to the Western Front. Special attention was devoted to anti-tank artillery regiments, formation of which was started before the defensive engagements. The experience of the first months of the war showed that tanks were the enemy's main strike force. Therefore the most important mission of artillery was to fight tanks. All artillery was brought in for this purpose--antitank, howitzer, gun, antiaircraft and rocket. Antitank defenses were organized with a consideration for requirements spelled out in a directive from the General Headquarters dated 28 July and in instructions from the Soviet Army's chief of artillery dated 17 August 1941. Antitank artillery strongpoints and areas that were disposed in depth began to be created in place of the antitank lines, with fire weapons deployed linearly in the most important sectors, that had failed to prove themselves in the first months of the war. These antitank strongpoints and areas made up the basis of antitank defense.

Antitank artillery reserves were given an important role in the fight against enemy tanks. In the fronts and armies they consisted of two or three antitank artillery regiments, while in the rifle divisions their strength varied from an antitank battalion to an antitank regiment. When sufficient quantities of antitank artillery were available, antitank artillery reserves were also present in rifle regiments, represented by one or two antitank batteries.

Creating artillery groups in the formations and major formations, the Soviet command took account of factors such as the low strength of artillery reinforcements, the great shortage of organic artillery and the broad defensive front of the armies.

Infantry support artillery groups were created in the rifle formations, equal in number to the number of rifle regiments in the assault echelon. Each group contained two or three battalions. In some cases divisions possessed long-range artillery groups consisting of up to one howitzer or gun reinforcement regiment. As far as army long-range artillery groups are concerned, they were present in the 19th (five battalions) and 16th^{1a} (three regiments) armies of the Western Front² and in the 43d Army (five battalions) in the Reserve Front.

An extremely grave situation evolved in the western sector in early October 1941. There was the danger that the enemy could break through to Moscow. A new defensive front had to be created on a rush basis, and the fascists had to be halted at the approaches to the capital.

The Mozhaysk defensive line, which extended from Volokolamsk to Kaluga, became the main line of resistance. This is why more than 40 artillery regiments were advanced to this line from the reserve of the General Headquarters and from the Northwestern and Southwestern fronts during the week beginning on 5 October.³ On just 10 October, 10 antitank artillery regiments came to the Mozhaysk defensive line from Moscow.⁴ On 10 October troops of the Western and Reserve fronts were combined into the Western Front.

The bulk of Western Front artillery was concentrated in the 16th and in the newly created 5th and 43d armies. Thus the 16th Army, which was defending in the

Volokolamsk sector along a front of up to 100 km, was reinforced in mid-October by six antitank artillery regiments, four gun and one rocket-launcher regiment of the RVGK;⁵ the 5th Army, which was operating in the Mozhaysk sector, was reinforced by 11 RVGK antitank artillery regiments; the 43d Army, which manned defenses in the Maloyaroslavets sector, was reinforced with eight antitank artillery regiments and one artillery battalion of the RVGK.⁶ In turn, artillery was massed within the armies in the most important sectors favorable for tanks. Thus the 316th Rifle Division, 16th Army, which was defending in the Volokolamsk sector, was reinforced with three antitank artillery regiments (the 296th, 525th and 483d) and one gun artillery regiment (the 523d) of the RVGK, and it was supported by the 14th Rocket Launcher Regiment. This made it possible to have a density of up to eight guns per kilometer in the division's main sector, which had a front of 8 km.

The 32d Rifle Division, 5th Army, which was defending in the Mozhaysk sector, was reinforced with six antitank artillery regiments and four battalions of corps artillery and rocket launcher regiments.

Measures implemented by the frontal command to mass artillery in the most important sectors and to create strong antitank defenses had a favorable effect on the results of the fight against enemy tanks.

Thus during 15-17 October artillery of the 32d Rifle Division, 5th Army was able to successfully repel savage attacks by enemy tanks and infantry with concentrated fire and direct fire. On 16 October just subunits of the 154th Artillery Regiment were able to destroy, by direct fire, 15 enemy combat vehicles that had broken through to their fire positions.

An example of successful fulfillment of missions in the defensive engagement and of the heroism of gunners could be found in the actions of the 525th, 483d, 296th, 289th and 768th antitank artillery regiments and gunners of the 316th Rifle Division, 16th Army in the Volokolamsk sector. On 18 October 27 enemy tanks were destroyed in savage combat by just the 296th and 768th antitank artillery regiments. Gunners of the 289th Antitank Artillery Regiment fought the enemy courageously as well. Interacting with rifle units of the 316th Rifle Division and combat engineers, in October they destroyed 59 tanks and up to 600 enemy enlisted men and officers.⁷ For the heroism displayed, the unit was awarded the Order of the Red Banner and more than 120 of its personnel earned government decorations.

The fighting was no less fierce in the Maloyaroslavets sector of the 43d Army's zone and in other portions of the front.

By the end of October the first offensive of the fascist German armies at Moscow collapsed.

Soviet artillery carried the main burden of the fight against fascist tanks in the October battles. It gave fire support to infantry, cavalry and tanks, it successfully fought German artillery and mortars and it prevented the approach of enemy reserves. However, it suffered significant losses as well. By the beginning of the enemy's second offensive in November 1941, there were only 2,436 guns and mortars, 268 rocket launcher vehicles and 113 antiaircraft guns in the troops of the Western Front. This was 32 percent less than the amount present on 30 September

1941. The operational density of artillery also became lower than at the beginning of the defensive engagement.

The enemy created a strong troop grouping in the Moscow strategic sector by mid-November. Just against the Western Front alone he concentrated 51 divisions, to include 13 tank and 7 motorized divisions.⁸ The enemy possessed about 6,500 guns, its tank strength was twice greater than that of our troops, and the strength of its artillery was more than a time and a half greater. Considering the enemy's advantage in tanks, the Supreme High Command took steps to organize a powerful, deeply disposed defense capable of withstanding their massed strikes. New antitank regiments were formed, and most of them were sent to the Western Front as reinforcements. By the beginning of the enemy's second offensive 20 antitank artillery regiments and seven high-power artillery regiments were committed to battle by the Western Front. The bulk of the antitank artillery regiments were massed in the anticipated sectors of the main tank thrusts and across the shortest routes to Moscow in the defense zones of the 16th and 49th armies. Thus nine antitank artillery regiments were transferred to the 16th Army, four were transferred to the 49th, and the rest of the major formations of the Western Front received one or two.

The antitank defenses of armies of the Western Front in the Volokolamsk and Mozhaysk sectors made up a system of fire-coordinated antitank strongpoints and antitank areas disposed in depth. The gun positions of the artillery groups were located near the antitank areas in order to permit reinforcement of the antitank defenses.

Direct fire combined with artillery fire from covered positions was broadly employed against tanks.

It should be noted that there were some unique features to the duel with the enemy's combat vehicles during the German November offensive against Moscow. Their thrusts were preceded by the actions of small groups of automatic riflemen, who infiltrated to artillery fire positions and put the gun crews out of action. Moreover the enemy committed tanks to battle as individual groups operating in many directions, rather than in the large groupings typical of October. Under these conditions decisive and independent actions by individual artillery units and even subunits (batteries, platoons) acquired special significance.

Rocket artillery played an important role in the defensive engagements. The command of the Western Front and the army commanders artfully utilized the maneuver and fire possibilities of this new weapon in the course of the defensive engagements, making surprise fire strikes against the penetrating enemy. Rocket launcher battalions covered all of the main roads leading to the capital, and they supported counterthrusts and counterattacks. For example on 16 November the 23d Rocket Launcher Battalion halted, with two "Katyusha" salvos, an enemy attack that was being made within the zone of the 217th Rifle Division, 50th Army. The enemy, who had concentrated in the towns of Malyshevo and Glebovo, lost up to 300 enlisted men and officers killed and wounded, three tanks and 30 motor vehicles. This made it possible for our units to counterattack the enemy successfully and liberate these towns from the fascists.

The fire strikes of the rocket launcher units not only inflicted serious losses upon the Germans but also had a great influence upon their morale.

It should be noted that the 16th Army, which possessed the greatest quantity of rocket artillery (10 battalions), successfully repelled savage attacks by the enemy and then made a number of counterthrusts. This was the first experience in using rocket artillery units on a large scale during the war.

Antiaircraft gunners also displayed high proficiency during the defensive engagements. Antiaircraft artillery not only covered the capital and other important objectives against air raids, but it also fought German tanks. Thus for example on 24 November 1941 19 batteries of I Antiaircraft Corps of the Moscow Antiaircraft Zone, armed with 76-mm antiaircraft guns, were included into the antitank defense system in the vicinity of Solnechnogorsk in the zone of the 16th Army, Western Front. Antiaircraft batteries of the National Air Defense Forces also played an important role against enemy tank attacks in November 1941 at Kashira.

Soviet gunners successfully fought enemy tanks and infantry in close coordination with other branches of troops. In particular in the period from 22 to 26 November gunners of the 702d Antitank Artillery Regiment and of antitank aircraft battalions manned defenses together with soldiers of two rifle and one cavalry division and two tank brigades in the Venev combat sector at Tula.

In the final analysis, together with rifle and armored troops and aviation, Soviet gunners inflicted tremendous losses upon the enemy during the defensive operations at Moscow. In the period from 16 November to 6 December just artillery of the Western Front alone destroyed, by direct fire combined with massed fire from covered gun positions, 402 enemy tanks, 27 artillery and mortar batteries, a large quantity of machine guns and antitank guns and 15,000 enlisted men and officers, and it suppressed 252 enemy artillery and mortar batteries.⁹ During the entire period of defensive combat, antiaircraft artillery of the National Air Defense Forces destroyed a significant quantity of tanks, about 5,000 motor vehicles and up to 50,000 enemy enlisted men and officers.

The counteroffensive, which was the first major offensive operation of the Soviet troops in the war years, was prepared for during the defensive engagement with a consideration for the enemy's superiority in men and equipment. The Supreme High Command General Headquarters systematically reinforced the fronts with personnel, combat equipment and armament. By the end of the defensive engagement the 10 armies of the Western Front possessed 4,918 guns and mortars--that is, a time and a half more than on 1 October, and twice more than on 16 November. Moreover there were about 300 rocket launcher vehicles and 226 antiaircraft guns in the front. Some artillery from the Moscow Defense Zone was brought in to support the front's troops.

According to the plan for the operation, the bulk of the artillery (more than 2,500 guns and mortars and 107 rocket launcher vehicles) was concentrated on the axis of the main strike (in the 30th, 1st Strike, 20th and 16th armies), which made it possible to create a 1.5-time superiority, and in the 16th Army a two-time superiority, in artillery. The average density in the 30th, 1st Strike and 20th armies was 14-27 guns and mortars per kilometer of front, while in the 16th Army it was more than 37.

The rifle divisions were reinforced with two or three artillery regiments and one to three rocket launcher battalions. For example the 9th Guards Rifle Division was reinforced by the 417th Gun Artillery and the 610th and 871st Antitank Artillery regiments and by the 2d, 16th and 17th separate rocket launcher battalions.

The artillery grouping was not created in the typical way. In those armies which possessed sufficient quantities of artillery (the 16th and 20th), infantry support groups with a strength of two to three battalions were created in the regiments, while some divisions had long-range artillery groups as well. For example the long-range artillery group of the 9th Guards Rifle Division consisted of two battalions of the 471st Gun Artillery Regiment from the RVGK. There were no infantry support artillery groups in formations of the 10th Army, which were advancing in separate sectors. All battalion artillery was attached as individual batteries to battalions and companies.

Antitank artillery attached to the divisions was not included in the artillery groups; instead, it was used to create antitank defenses in depth and to secure captured lines.

Long-range artillery groups were not always created in the major formations. But wherever they did exist (in the 16th and 20th armies), they were used against artillery and to support rifle divisions advancing in the main sector (331st Rifle Division, 20th Army).

Our troops went over to the counteroffensive without an operational pause following brief artillery strikes lasting 10-15 minutes (1st Strike, 20th and 16th armies) or without artillery preparation at all (30th Army). Attack by infantry and tanks was supported by successive fire concentration or by concentrated fire on call, and advancing units were supported in depth by fire from individual batteries, battalions and close support guns.

During the counteroffensive fascist German troops defeated at Moscow were forced westward with large losses. They dug in on a prepared line extending along the rivers Lama and Ruza. Troops of the Western Front were forced to surmount these lines in difficult winter conditions.

The main thrust was made by the 20th Army reinforced by eight RVGK artillery regiments (138th, 471st, 517th, 523d, 528th and 537th gun artillery regiments, 544th Heavy Howitzer Artillery Regiment, 438th Antitank Regiment), five battalions of rocket artillery and two armored trains. It itself possessed 580 guns, mortars and rocket launcher vehicles. This made it possible for the command of the major formation to create a twofold superiority over the enemy in artillery. About 450 guns and mortars were concentrated in a breakthrough sector 7 km wide, which made it possible to raise the density of guns and mortars to 60 and more per kilometer of front.¹⁰

The artillery grouping in the 20th Army was the most powerful, and it differed significantly from the groupings possessed by major formations of the front in early December 1941. The infantry and tank support artillery groups of the rifle divisions consisted of two or three battalions. Rifle divisions were additionally given rocket artillery battalions. General-purpose artillery groups having a strength of three or four gun battalions were created in temporary tactical groups

consisting of combined-arms and tank formations in order to combat enemy artillery and reserves. There were two regiments in the army long-range artillery group.

On 10 January, following 90 minutes of artillery preparation, the infantry and tanks went over to the attack, which was supported by successive concentration of fire. By the end of 12 January, as a result of stubborn fighting our troops penetrated the enemy defenses. Their success was exploited by committing the II Guards Cavalry Corps to the breakthrough. Later on troops of the 20th and neighboring armies of the Western Front advanced 50-60 km as they exploited the offensive, and by 25 January they reached the enemy's Rzhev-Gzhatsk defensive line.

Not only conventional but also rocket artillery was extensively employed during the counteroffensive. Its use was especially effective during exploitation of the offensive deep in enemy defenses. Advancing together with the combat formations of the assault echelons, rocket launcher battalions helped to surmount German defenses on enemy lines and successfully assisted in the repulsion of counterattacks.

Summarizing the results, we should note that on the whole, Soviet artillery played a major role in the battle of Moscow, during both the defensive engagement and the counteroffensive.

During the defensive engagement our gunners offered stubborn resistance to the enemy and inflicted tangible losses upon him. They fought especially effectively against tanks. The organization and conduct of antitank defense enjoyed further development during the October and November battles. Artillery was concentrated decisively in the most important tankable sectors. Antitank strongpoints and areas reinforced with artillery resources were the backbone of antitank defense. They were disposed in depth.

The counteroffensive of the Soviet troops demonstrated that successful penetration of enemy defenses was possible only when artillery was massed in the breakthrough sectors and when attacking infantry and tanks were supported with continuous fire. The rich experience of the combat use of Soviet artillery was generalized and brought to the awareness of the troops in a directive of the Supreme High Command General Headquarters dated 10 January 1942. The document emphasized the need for massing artillery on the axis of the main strike and for abandoning artillery preparation for the artillery offensive. The directive stated that artillery must not only prepare for the attack but it must also provide continuous support to the attacking troops. The essence of the artillery offensive was clearly defined in the 1942 Infantry Combat Regulations (Part 2). They stated that the artillery offensive includes three periods: artillery preparation for the attack, artillery support to the attack and artillery support (close support) of infantry and tanks during combat in depth.

The new principles of using artillery in the battle of Moscow became the foundation for all subsequent offensive operations during the war and for the use of artillery today.

Footnotes

1. "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945" [History of World War II 1939-1945], Vol 4, Voenizdat, 1975, pp 92-93.
- 1a. Artillery chief, Major General of Artillery V. I. Kazakov.
2. This article will henceforth discuss mainly the combat use of artillery in the Western Front, the troops of which carried the main burden of the struggle with the enemy.
3. "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945," Vol 4, p 96.
4. VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 2, 1977, p 90.
5. TsAMO [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], f. 208, op. 2540, d. 21, ll. 131-137.
6. TsAMO, f. 398, op. 9312, d. 20, ll. 2-4.
7. Ibid., f. 208, op. 2540, d. 21, ll. 131-137.
8. "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945," Vol 4, p 103.
9. TsAMO, f. 5, op. 18, d. 9, l. 400.
10. "Sovetskaya artilleriya v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne 1941-1945 gg." [Soviet Artillery in the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945], Voenizdat, 1960, p 84.

Armored Troops

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 1, Jan 82 (signed to press 25 Dec 81) pp 18-25

[Article, title as above, by HSU Ch Mar Armd Trps P. Rotmistrov]

[Text] The armored troops played an important role together with other branches of the ground troops in the failure of Operation Typhoon and in the subsequent counteroffensive of Soviet troops at Moscow. Soviet tank formations and units honorably fulfilled their missions. They were a powerful, maneuverable strike force which imparted aggressiveness to combat activities of Soviet troops in defense, and promoted successful forward progress during the counteroffensive.

The combat use of armored troops and the nature of their missions in the battle of Moscow depended on a number of objective factors. One of them was the limited combat vehicles available. While at the end of September 1941 the enemy had 1,700 tanks in the Moscow sector--75 percent of the total number of tanks on the Soviet-German front, our three fronts (Western, Bryansk and Reserve) had a total of only 990 combat vehicles--that is, the enemy had 1.7 times more tanks. Therefore even within the zone of defense occupied by troops of the Western Front, against which the main German forces were pitted, average operational density of tanks was only 0.9 combat vehicles per kilometer of front.¹ The enemy still had a superiority in tanks even after our troops went over to the counteroffensive.

The shortage of combat vehicles was what predetermined the organizational structure of the armored troops. Separate tank brigades and battalions became the principal organizational units.

Tank troops were represented at the beginning of the battle of Moscow by: in the Western Front (commander, Colonel General I. S. Konev)--101st and 107th motorized rifle divisions, 126th, 127th, 128th and 143d tank brigades; in the Reserve Front (commander, Marshal of the Soviet Union S. M. Budennyi)--144th, 145th, 146th, 147th and 148th tank brigades; in the Bryansk Front (commander, Lieutenant General A. I. Yermenko)--108th Tank Division, 42d, 121st, 141st and 150th tank brigades, 43d, 113th, 114th and 115th separate tank battalions. As a rule the tank units and formations were in the back-up echelons and in the reserves of the armies and fronts.

Having been a direct participant of the battle of Moscow,² the author of this article is able to analyze the combat use of armored troops during repulsion of the first and second offensives of the Germans and during the counteroffensive of our troops.

During the defensive engagements the formations and units of the armored troops had the mission of holding firmly to the most important lines and centers of defense jointly with infantry and artillery (or independently), making powerful strikes against the enemy from ambushes; dividing fascist tank columns and destroying them in parts; covering the withdrawal of combined arms formations to new lines of defense; destroying penetrating enemy troops with strong counterthrusts and counterattacks.

As we know the enemy made his first thrust against troops of the left wing of the Bryansk Front in the morning of 30 September 1941, and 2 days later, at dawn on 2 October, the main forces of Army Group Center went over to the offensive within the zone of the Western Front. Enjoying superiority in men and equipment, the Germans penetrated the defenses in the Sychevo, Yukhnov and Sevsk sectors, enveloping Vyaz'ma and Bryansk from north and south.

A frontal operational group was created under the command of General I. V. Boldin to fight the groupings that had broken through in the Western Front. Its composition included the 126th and 128th tank brigades and the 152d Rifle and 101st Motorized Rifle divisions. The group was given the mission of making a counterthrust against penetrating enemy troops at the junction of the 30th and 19th armies, and restoring the front of defenses along the Dnepr in coordination with the 31st Army.³ During the first days of October it struck the enemy and repelled numerous attacks by units of the 56th Motorized Corps. On just 4 October alone, soldiers of the 101st Motorized Rifle Division damaged and destroyed 21 tanks and many guns and machine-guns. During 4 and 5 October the 126th Tank Brigade knocked 50 tanks out of action. The greatest success was enjoyed by the 128th Tank Brigade. In the period from 3 to 7 October it destroyed 96 tanks, 22 armored vehicles, 93 motor vehicles, 20 mortars and up to 1,500 enemy enlisted men and officers.⁴ Although general I. V. Boldin's group could not complete its mission fully due to a shortage of forces, it did nevertheless manage to foil the fascist plan to widen the breach in the center of the Western Front.

Counterthrusts were made on the left wing of the Bryansk Front by a frontal operational group commanded by General A. N. Yermakov, which included three rifle and

and two cavalry divisions, two tank brigades (the 121st and the 150th) and the 113th Separate Tank Battalion. Despite the courage and heroism of Soviet soldiers, it was unable to stop the enemy and push him back to his lines of departure.

After the fascist German troops reached Vyaz'ma on 7 October and encircled part of the forces of the Western and Reserve fronts, the main mission of armored troops in the vicinity of this city became covering the withdrawal of combined-arms formations to the Mzhaysk defensive line, supporting restoration of an organized front along this line and holding centers of defense on the main roads leading to Moscow. It was with this purpose in mind that the Supreme High Command General Headquarters transferred six tank brigades from its reserve to the most important sectors: the 18th and 19th--in the vicinity of Gzhatsk, the 9th and 17th--in the vicinity of Medyn', and the 8th and 21st--in the vicinity of Kalinin. They were included into the composition of army groups covering the withdrawal with the purpose of making strong fire strikes from ambushes and foiling the enemy's attempts at using the highways for a charge on Moscow. In all during the week (from 5 to 12 October) 14 rifle divisions, 16 tank brigades, more than 40 artillery regiments and other units were transferred from the General Headquarters reserve and the Northwestern and Southwestern fronts to the Western Front.^{5,6}

However, despite the significant quantity of armored troops, because the tank formations and units were dispersed over a broad front (from Kalinin to Yefremov), they were not used effectively enough.

In mid-October the situation continued to be extremely complex in the Western Front. Its weakened armies were fighting in a zone extending from the Volzhsk Reservoir to Kaluga. The main forces were concentrated in the most important sectors: The Volokolamsk sector was covered by the 16th Army, the Mzhaysk sector was covered by the just-created 5th Army, the Maloyaroslavets sector was covered by the 43d Army, and the Kaluga sector was covered by the 49th Army. Troops operating at Naro-Fominsk were brought together under the administration of the 33d Army.

The enemy fought toward Moscow along the shortest route. The Germans launched four divisions containing up to 200 tanks against the 16th Army, in which every rifle battalion and cavalry regiment defended a front 5-6 km wide and in which the density of artillery did not exceed two guns per kilometer. The troops of this major formation, including tank crews of the 127th Tank Brigade, supported by aviation and displaying exceptional stubbornness, successfully fought off the enemy attacks.

The fascists were halted in the Volokolamsk sector on 27 October.

In the Mzhaysk sector units of the 32d Rifle Division and subunits of the 18th, 19th and 20th tank brigades, which were within the composition of the 5th Army, ward off enemy attacks on the historic field of Borodino for 4 days with the support of aviation. They destroyed thousands of enlisted men and officers and a large quantity of combat equipment. Soviet units retreated only after the enemy managed to outflank them. On 18 October they were compelled to leave Mzhaysk in the face of the onslaught of German tanks.

A tense situation developed in the Kaluga and Maloyaroslavets sectors. Following the capture of Kaluga and penetration of the 49th Army's defenses, the enemy rushed toward Taruse and Maloyaroslavets. The approaches to Maloyaroslavets were steadfastly defended by a troop group of the 43d Army consisting of a rifle division, the 17th Tank Brigade, the Podol'sk infantry and machinegun-artillery schools and two battalions of a reserve regiment. It was reinforced by four artillery regiments and three rocket launcher battalions. By 18 October the enemy had still not broken through to the city, even after 5 days of stubborn battle.

While Soviet troops were fighting savage battles against the main forces of Army Group Center pushing toward Moscow, the enemy's 3d Tank Group and part of the forces of his 9th Field Army waged an offensive in the direction of Rzhev and Kalinin. The enemy was able to punch his way northeast along the Volga and to break into Kalinin on 14 October. Attempts to exploit the offensive toward Torzhok were foiled by a counterthrust made by an operational troop group commanded by General N. F. Vatutin, which contained the 8th Tank Brigade, two rifle and two cavalry divisions and the 46th Motorcycle Regiment. The main forces of the brigade and the motorcycle regiment, having completed a 240-kilometer march in a day and a half, reached the approaches to Kalinin by 1400 hours on 15 October, and two and a half hours later, interacting with the 934th Rifle Regiment, they went over to the offensive with the purpose of destroying the enemy in the city's northwestern part. For 3 days the tank crews, gunners and soldiers of the 934th Rifle Regiment fought savage battles with the forward units of the German XXXXI Motorized Corps, 3d Tank Group. During these battles the 8th Tank Brigade destroyed 22 tanks, 10 guns, several motor batteries, 10 armored vehicles and more than 600 enemy enlisted men and officers.⁷ The 21st Tank Brigade also fought for Kalinin. Striking from the south, it caused considerable losses to the enemy in this city.

The Kalinin Front was formed on 17 October 1941 (commander, Colonel General I. S. Konev) in order to organize repulsion of the fascists from northwest of the capital more effectively. This front was given the 22d, 29th, 30th and 31st armies, the 183d and 185th rifle divisions, the 46th and 54th cavalry divisions, the 58th Tank and the 107th Motorized Rifle Division, and the 8th and 21st tank brigades.

During 19-22 October the 8th Tank Brigade, which was within the composition of the Kalinin Front, operated from an ambush organized along the Kalinin-Torzhok highway. Coordinating with units of the 185th Rifle Division, it fought stubborn battles with an enemy grouping that had broken through northwest of Kalinin. In savage battles in the Kalinin sector, armored formations and units operating together with rifle troops forced the enemy to abandon his hopes of exploiting the offensive toward Torzhok, and to go over to defense.

In the Orel-Tula sector, at the beginning of October the southern strike grouping of the fascist German troops, which consisted of the 2d Tank Group and 2d Field Army, penetrated the defenses of troops of the Bryansk Front, reached the vicinity of Orel and created a real threat of capturing Tula and enveloping Moscow from the south. To cover this sector and retard the offensive of the German troops, several reserve formations were hastily brought forward, to include the 4th and 11th tank brigades.

In heavy fighting in the vicinity of Mtsensk, jointly with the 4th⁸ and 11th tank brigades and with the support of the 6th Reserve Aviation Group of the General Headquarters and frontal aviation, the I Guards Rifle Corps detained the enemy despite his numerical superiority, and then knocked him out of the city with a decisive counterthrust on 11 October. Operating from ambushes and participating in short counterattacks, Soviet tank crews inflicted great losses upon the fascists.

By 29 October the forward units of Guderian's 2d Tank Army (this is what the 2d Tank Group came to be called) reached Tula, but they were unable to take it. Soldiers of the 50th Army, tank crews of the 108th Tank Division, the Tula Workers' Regiment and other formations and units distinguished themselves in the battles for the city. Today, Tula is a Hero City.

In the end of October the enemy was stopped by troops of the Western Front on a line extending from the Volzhsk Reservoir southeast of Volokolamsk along the Nara and Oka rivers to Aleksin. Troops of the Kalinin and Bryansk fronts offered stubborn resistance to the enemy. The fighting was especially fierce on the Mozhaysk line of defense, where armored troops played an extremely significant role. What was typical of the combat use of armored troops of the Western Front in the defensive battles of the second half of October and the first half of November on the Mozhaysk line of defense was that in addition to operating within the combat areas, they were also given the missions of supporting the boundaries and flanks of the armies. Depending on the situation, the following tactics were employed in this case: Independent defense along a broad front, patrolling by a group of tanks along roads and fire strikes from ambushes, and successive retention of lines by mobile defense and counterattacks.

Independent defense along a broad front was the rule when there was no direct contact with the enemy. The combat formation of a tank brigade was made up of a single echelon and a small reserve group of tanks. Scouts and battle outposts were located in forward positions. But when infantry (up to a regiment) and artillery (up to a battalion) were attached to the brigade, the defense was organized on a front of normal breadth, and light tanks were withdrawn into a back-up echelon.

It should be noted that there was no particular system for organizing ambushes in that period. There are even cases of failure to coordinate the use of tanks between tank and combined-arms commanders. On the whole, however, actions from ambushes combined with counterattacks were, in the situation offered by the defensive battles on the Mozhaysk line, the most suitable form of using armored troops against superior enemy forces.

It should be emphasized that tank ambushes organized in antitank areas fought enemy tanks effectively when they were deployed not in a line but in a checkerboard pattern and when they interacted closely with each other, with rifle troops, with tank reserves and artillery.

Counterthrusts having the purpose of improving the operational position of the armies were made by the forces of two or three tank brigades reinforced with infantry and artillery. In this case their combat formation was organized into two or three echelons, which ensured a high density of combat vehicles per kilometer of front.

For example the 4th, 27th and 28th tank brigades participated in the counterthrust of the 16th Army. During 8-11 November they destroyed up to two German infantry regiments and captured a major enemy strongpoint in the vicinity of Skirmanov.

The failure of the October Moscow offensive of the fascist troops did not cause any changes in the enemy's strategic goals. As before, the enemy persisted in his aspiration to seize the capital. The German command planned to break through the defensive on the flanks of the Western Front by powerful thrusts with tank groupings from Volokolamsk and an area south of Tula and, swiftly enveloping Moscow from the north and south, close a ring of encirclement about our troops east of the capital.

Reckoning with the enemy's intentions, the Supreme High Command General Headquarters reinforced the Western Front with rifle, cavalry, tank and motorized divisions and tank brigades. In particular the 58th, 108th and 112th tank divisions and the 8th, 11th, 21st, 23d, 31st, 32d, 33d and 145th tank brigades were attached to its major formations. By mid-November the front had a total of 35 infantry, 3 motorized rifle, 3 tank and 12 cavalry divisions and 14 tank brigades (counting the troops transferred from the Bryansk Front to the 50th Army on 10 November and from the Kalinin Front to the 30th Army on 17 November).⁹ As before, however, the strength of the Soviet divisions was significantly inferior to that of the Germans.

The most typical features of using armored troops of the Western Front during the November offensive were: Actions from ambushes combined with counterattacks, defense of important lines and points on the lines of deployment of reserve major formations, and counterthrusts within the composition of army operational groups. The way ambushes were organized within the defensive zone of the 16th Army to cover the Volokolamsk highway is instructive. The tank ambushes were disposed in depth. The first echelon consisted of the 1st Guards and 27th Tank brigades. The second contained the 23d and 28th tank brigades. The third echelon was made up of the forces of the 33d Tank Brigade. The total depth of the ambushes attained 20 km. What was new about their structure in this sector was not only the great depth of their disposition but also the close communication maintained between echelons and the brigades themselves, and with rifle troops, artillery and cavalry. In operational respects the tank brigades were subordinated to the commanders of the rifle and cavalry divisions in the sectors of which they were operating. Such was the case, for example, when the 1st Guards and 27th Tank brigades were defending together with the II Guards Cavalry Corps, when the 28th and 33d tank brigades were defending together with the 18th Rifle Division and when the 23d Tank Brigade was defending together with the 8th Guards Rifle Division. For 5 days the tank brigades ward off numerous enemy tank attacks in the Volokolamsk sector in coordination with the rifle troops, artillery and cavalry.

Tank crews operated successfully within the composition of army operational groups, which had the missions of defending lines and cities and making tangible counterthrusts against the enemy. The operational groups were formed up into two echelons and a reserve for counterthrusts. Tanks operated in the first echelon as a rule, and cavalry was in the second. If the terrain was not favorable to tank movement, tanks were placed in the second echelon. Despite the fact that artillery and air preparation was not conducted and coordination between the units and formations of the operational groups was not organized due to a lack of time, their counterthrusts did lead to tangible results.

Operating together with rifle units in the Klin-Solnechnogorsk sector, the 25th and 31st tank brigades of General F. D. Zakharov's army operational group made attacks on the enemy and held Klin for 3 days (from 20 to 22 November). General P. A. Belov's operational group, which contained the I Guards Cavalry Corps, the 112th Tank Division, the 9th Tank Brigade and two separate tank battalions, on 27 November made a strong counterthrust together with the 173d Rifle Division against enemy troops that had broken through in the vicinity of Kashira.

Operational groups under the command of generals M. Ye. Katukov, F. T. Remizov and others also operated in the November defensive battles at Moscow.

Discussing the combat use of armored troops during the counteroffensive, which troops of the Kalinin Front began at dawn on 5 December and which troops of the Western and the right wing of the Southwestern fronts joined on the morning of the following day, it should be noted that with the support of aviation, they broke through the defenses jointly with rifle troops and artillery, seized enemy strong-points and pursued the enemy within the composition of improvised mobile army and frontal groups.

When it came time to penetrate defenses, tank brigades and separate tank battalions were attached to rifle formations, in which they provided close support to infantry. Each rifle regiment received five to seven combat vehicles. A small group of tanks and a motorized rifle battalion from a tank brigade were left in the reserve of the rifle division's commander. Although it was in keeping with the situation, such dispersal of the tank formations and units made it impossible to create a strong fist in the direction of the main thrust of the rifle division.

Sometimes the commanders of rifle divisions used the tank brigades in compact formation. In this case the brigade would penetrate defenses in the sector of the main thrust together with a rifle regiment in a sector 1.5-2 km wide. But if the brigade had to operate in an independent sector, as a rule it was given a rifle battalion and up to a battalion of artillery. The brigade's combat formation consisted of two lines of tanks, an artillery group and a reserve. Heavy or medium tanks advanced in the first line, and light tanks advanced in the second together with an automatic rifle assault group. The breakthrough front was 1-1.5 km wide. The brigade's motorized rifle battalion was usually left in the reserve of the brigade commander.

Following penetration of the defenses the tank brigades and battalions went over to pursuit of the enemy, making extensive use of enveloping and encircling maneuvers against enemy troops defending in major population centers.

The brigades formed forward detachments consisting of three to five tanks and an assault force to attack the flanks and rear of the retreating enemy.

In order to cut the highways north and south of Solnechnogorsk, forward detachments were created out of the 24th and 31st tank brigades. A forward detachment was separated out of the 17th Tank Brigade to reach the city of Istra quickly.

The most decisive actions were performed by the forward detachment of the 31st Tank Brigade, consisting of a KV tank, three T-34 tanks, a BT tank and a platoon

of automatic riflemen acting as an assault force. On 10 December, having marched from Rozhdestveno, at 1200 hours they liberated the town of Kochergino, annihilating up to a company of Germans, and at 1500 hours they seized the town of Khmet'yevo, and an hour later the town of Dubinino, thus cutting the Moscow-Kalinin highway south of Solnechnogorsk.

Army (and even frontal) mobile groups were created in the course of the pursuit in order to encircle and annihilate the enemy. Their composition was variable. For example two mobile groups were created out of the 16th Army to encircle enemy troops defending on the Istra line. General F. T. Remizov's group contained the 145th Tank Brigade, the 44th Cavalry Division and the 17th Rifle Brigade, while General M. Ye. Katukov's group included the 1st Guards, the 17th Tank and the 40th Rifle brigades, and the 89th Separate Tank Battalion.¹⁰

The actions of mobile groups during the counteroffensive were distinguished by their diversity. Thus during pursuit of the enemy in the Volokolamsk sector, the 16th Army groups indicated above sent out scouts, forward detachments, traffic control detachments and security detachments. Pursuit was conducted on two routes in a double-echelon formation, with tank brigades and cavalry in the first echelon and rifle brigades and reinforcements in the second. A reserve was not created. The forward detachments seized population centers on the move. A mobile group of the 50th Army commanded by General V. S. Popov, which pursued the enemy in the Kaluga sector, had two regiments of the 154th Rifle Division, the Tula Workers' Regiment, the 21st Separate Rocket Launcher Battalion and a company of static flame-throwers in the first echelon and the 112th Tank and 31st Cavalry divisions in the second. This operational formation of the troop group was made necessary by the poor roads and forested terrain. Scouting parties, forward detachments and traffic control detachments were advanced from the group as well. Frontal pursuit combined with deep penetration into the enemy's disposition on routes parallel to his direction of retreat was typical of this mobile group.

A number of other groups participated in addition to the army mobile group indicated above, to include those of generals L. M. Dovator and V. A. Mishulin and a frontal mobile group commanded by General P. A. Belov. One of the army mobile groups was headed by the author of this article.

Summarizing the results, it should be emphasized that on the whole, the armored troops played a significant role in the defeat of fascist German troops at Moscow.

Tank formations and units were used at the approaches to the capital to cover the withdrawal of combined-arms formations. They did so by independent defense of individual lines and points, by actions from ambushes combined with counterattacks, by covering the flanks of the armies and by conducting defensive battles within the combat areas. They were also used in counterthrusts having the purpose of halting the enemy's advance.

Disposition of tank ambushes in depth was a new element in the combat use of armored troops in the period of the November defensive operations.

During the counteroffensive the tank brigades and separate tank battalions were included together with cavalry and rifle formations into the composition of

improvised army and frontal mobile groups, created for the first time to pursue the enemy with the purpose of encircling and annihilating him.

Analysis of the combat use of armored troops in the counteroffensive at Moscow persuasively demonstrates the necessity and expediency of including large tank formations in the offensive troop grouping, of massing tanks on the axes of the main thrusts, of organizing close coordination with other branches of troops and of using tanks not only for close infantry support but also for independent actions in depth.

Despite their low strength, the armored troops were used during the counteroffensive mainly for operational missions. The valuable experience that was obtained was subsequently utilized to improve the organizational structure of the armored troops and to improve their operational and tactical use in subsequent offensive operations of the Great Patriotic War.

Footnotes

1. "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945," Vol 4, Voenizdat, 1975, p 94.
2. P. A. Rotmistrov commanded the 8th Tank Brigade as a colonel during the battle of Moscow.
3. TsAMO SSSR, f. 208, op. 10169, d. 12, ll. 8-10.
4. "Sovetskiye tankovyye voyska 1941-1945" [Soviet Tank Troops 1941-1945], Voenizdat, 1973, p 37.
5. On 10 October 1941 troops of the Western and Reserve fronts were combined into one front--the Western (commander, Army General G. K. Zhukov).
6. "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945," Vol 4, p 96.
7. "Sovetskiye tankovyye voyska 1941-1945," p 38.
8. By an order published by the People's Commissar of Defense on 11 November 1941, the 4th Tank Brigade was renamed the 1st Guards Tank Brigade for its successful actions at Mtsensk.
9. "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945," Vol 4, p 104.
10. "Sovetskiye tankovyye voyska 1941-1945," p 48.

Engineer Troops

MOSCOW VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 1, Jan 82 (signed to press 25 Dec 81) pp 26-31

[Article, title as above, by Chief of the V. V. Kuybyshev Military Engineering Academy Col Gen Engr Trps Ye. Kolibernov]

[Text] The most important missions of the engineer troops in the defensive engagements at Moscow were to support the defensive operations of the fronts deployed in

this strategic sector, and to participate in the construction of lines of defense in the rear. A significant proportion of the engineer formations of the standing army were attached to the fronts for these missions, to include 30 frontal and army engineer battalions of different purposes in the Western Front, 7 in the Bryansk Front and 12 in the Reserve Front. The rifle formations contained organic engineer units and subunits.¹ In all, there were 80 separate combat engineer battalions contained within the rifle divisions of the three fronts.

Military construction units and the local public were brought in to create the lines of defense. In particular, 450,000 of the capital's residents were mobilized for their construction.² The system of state lines of defense included the Vyaz'ma (Rzhev-Vyaz'ma) and Mozhaysk lines of defense and the Moscow defense zone, which was organized in response to a decision of the State Defense Committee dated 12 October 1941. It was to include a forward defense area security zone and two lines. The main line was to be built in the form of a half-circle 15-20 km from Moscow. The city line paralleled the ring railroad. The city was prepared for defense as well.

The Vyaz'ma and Mozhaysk lines of defense consisted of three zones made up for the most part of battalion defense areas. Reinforced field-type defense areas were set up in the Mozhaysk defensive system in the Volokolamsk, Mozhaysk, Maloyaroslavets and Kaluga sectors. The total depth of the engineer preparations in this important strategic sector was 300 km.³

Within the defense zones of the fronts, the engineer units and subunits of the major formations and formations laid minefields before the forward edge and in the defensive positions, they built dirt-and-timber emplacements and command posts, they repaired roads and bridges and they laid track-ways to support partial offensive operations.

The experience of the combat activities of the Soviet troops against the German invaders in summer 1941 demonstrated that because the tactical defense zone was not stable enough, penetrating enemy tank groupings had to be fought mainly at operational depth. This is why a decision was made at the beginning of the defensive engagement in the Moscow strategic sector to create a deep system of minefields on roads leading to Moscow. With this purpose 10 obstacle construction detachments with 50 combat engineers in each were formed in October 1941 out of students of the Military Engineering Academy and cadets of the Moscow Military Engineering School. They made preparations to demolish all of the most important structures on the main roads, they laid land mines at road intersections and on defiles, and they mined the probable routes of advance of enemy tanks to a depth of 75 km. They used more than 23,500 antitank mines and a large quantity of explosives.⁴ The effectiveness of the actions of the obstacle construction detachments, including the mobile ones, may be judged from an entry in the combat log of the enemy's 4th Tank Group in October 1941: "Bridges over every river that German formations must cross fly up into the air as soon as the first German tank appears."⁵

Antitank artillery fire and minefields in sectors favoring tank movement played an important role in halting the enemy's tank attacks.

Thus in October 1941, within the defense zone of the 16th Army in the vicinity of Spass-Ryukhovsk, forces of the 289th Antitank Artillery Regiment, the 579th Separate Combat Engineer Battalion and a company of the 42d Separate Motorized

Engineer Battalion, which possessed a mobile reserve of mines (2,600 units), successfully repelled massed tank attacks by the Germans, who lost 59 tanks.⁶

Use of delayed-action mines and radio-controlled land mines by special subunits of the engineer troops was a surprise to the enemy. They were used in the enemy rear in October 1941 to demolish a number of important objectives, to include several large railroad and road bridges.

During the lull between the first and second Moscow offensives of the fascist German troops, special attention was turned to improving the antitank defenses and to engineer preparations within the zones of the fronts and armies.

Due to a shortage of explosives, nonexplosive obstacles were also erected on an extensive scale at the approaches to Moscow. The capital's laborers took a direct part in their erection as well.

In sum total they dug 676 km of antitank ditches, 445 km of escarpments and counter-scarps, they set up more than 1,300 km of wire entanglements, they laid antitank obstacles on a front 380 km wide, and they built more than 30,000 gun emplacements on the lines of defense covering Moscow. They built barriers in the forests surrounding Moscow 1,528 km long.⁷

Two operational engineer groups created by decision of the Supreme High Command General Headquarters in November 1941 played a major role in halting the enemy's November offensive and wearing out his strike groupings. They created large obstacle zones in the areas between the Volzhsk and Istra reservoirs and between Tula and Stalinogorsk in order to constrain the maneuvers of enemy tank formations attempting to break through to Moscow from the northwest and southwest.

Following a plan approved by Army General G. K. Zhukov, commander of the Western Front, one operational group consisting of six engineer and combat engineer battalions, two combat engineer companies and two motorized rifle battalions covered the Klin sector within the zone of advance of the enemy's 3d and 4th tank groups, and it operated in close coordination with troops of the 30th and 16th and then the 1st Strike and 20th armies. Its forces demolished and burned 310 bridges, destroyed 183 km of highways and railroads, built about 400 barriers, laid 53,000 different mines and land mines, including remote-controlled mines, and detonated 100 land mines on the roads.⁸

Another operational group consisting of nine engineer battalions operated at the boundary between the Western and Southwestern fronts in the Kashira and Ryazan' sectors. It laid more than 100 minefields, on which a large quantity of enemy manpower and combat equipment were annihilated.

Frontal, army and divisional engineer units and subunits successfully fought the attacking enemy tanks. They extensively maneuvered their obstacle construction resources, they laid minefields, and they operated within tank destroyer groups, displaying proficiency, steadfastness, selflessness and courage. The engineer troops interacted closely with other branches of troops.

Army General G. K. Zhukov, commander of the Western Front, gave a high evaluation to their activities in the defensive period of the battle of Moscow in a report to the Chairman of the State Defense Committee dated 8 December 1941. He wrote: "Use of antitank mines always produces a great impact.... This can be explained mainly by the fact that coordination with combat engineer units on the battlefield was improved significantly in the last battles. Tank destroyer subunits advanced with antitank mines in the direction of tank movement and laid the mines quickly, sometimes in direct proximity to enemy tanks. In a battle at the town of Akulovo, tanks were herded into minefields by defensive artillery fire, where they suffered large losses. Steps were taken to disseminate this interaction experience to all armies of the front."⁹

An example of irreproachable fulfillment of military duty can be found in the immortal heroism of 11 soldiers of a combat engineer platoon (commanded by Junior Lieutenant P. I. Firstov) of the 1077th Rifle Regiment, 316th Rifle Division on 18 November 1941. Reliving the actions of the heroes of the Panfilov Regiment, they kept enemy tanks from getting through. Out of the 11 soldiers, 8 died, and 3 of the seriously wounded combat engineers were taken prisoner and brutally tortured by the fascists. They were all awarded the Order of Lenin post mortem.¹⁰

The experience of the defense of Moscow demonstrated how much the significance of engineer measures in the course of combat activities had grown. At the same time it revealed some shortcomings in the combat use of engineer troops and equipment. In an order published 28 November 1941, the Supreme High Command General Headquarters generalized this experience and noted the ways to correct the shortcomings in the organization of the engineer service.¹¹ According to this document, the frontal and army military councils were to use the engineer troops only for their intended purpose, massing them in the sectors of the main strikes. Development of plans for engineer support to operations, ones which assigned concrete missions, became mandatory. The post of chief of engineer troops of the Soviet Army was instituted, the person filling it was given the rank of deputy people's commissar of defense, and an engineer headquarters was created. The position of deputy frontal (army) commander was introduced into the fronts and armies. The person occupying this post was also the chief of frontal (army) engineer troops. This same order created an engineer reserve of the Supreme High Command General Headquarters consisting of 90 combat engineer battalions, which was subsequently used to reinforce the operating fronts.

The engineer troops played a no less important role in the counteroffensive at Moscow and in the subsequent general offensive in the western sector. They were given the new, complex missions of supporting the offensive operations of the fronts and armies, which were conducted in a hard snowy winter.

The transition to an offensive without an operational lull did not cause significant changes in the grouping of the engineer troops. As of the beginning of December 1941 the fronts had the following numbers of various kinds of engineer battalions: Kalinin--11, Western--33, the Southwestern Front's strike grouping--5.

Later on, the Supreme High Command General Headquarters increased their number. Thus as of the beginning of January 1942 the frontal major formations contained 60 engineer (combat engineer and pontoon-and-bridge) battalions. The quantity of

troops in the engineer units and subunits also increased when the troops of armies in the Supreme High Command reserve were included in the composition of the strike groupings of the fronts. In all, there were about 100 divisional combat engineer battalions by this time in the strategic grouping of Soviet troops operating in the Moscow sector. Concurrently the 1st Combat Engineer Army (formed in November 1941), which possessed 10 brigades (of 8 battalions each), was included in the composition of the Western Front. Its formations were used mainly to repair and maintain roads in the operational rear: Seven brigades were in the right wing and three were in the left wing of the Western Front.¹²

By the beginning of the counteroffensive the combined-arms armies as a rule possessed one or two engineer battalions. During the offensive operations the major formations of the frontal strike groupings received two or three engineer (pontoon-and-bridge) battalions as reinforcements.

During the winter offensive operations of 1941-1942 the main missions of the engineer subunits, units, formations and major formations were to remove obstacles and lay track-ways, operate in the composition of assault groups, erect crossings, maintain delivery and evacuation routes in the snowy winter conditions (this mission was handled at that time by engineer troops rather than the road repair and traffic control troops, as became the case later on), erection of obstacles to repel enemy counterattacks and counterthrusts and secure attained lines.

It should be pointed out that because of the large volume of engineer missions in the rear of the major formations, divisions in the assault echelon did not receive engineer reinforcements as a rule. When the enemy limited his active mining operations to just roads and the approaches to isolated strongpoints, creation of one or two obstacle construction groups (detachments) (depending on the number of roads in the zone of advance) in each division was found to be sufficient. Simultaneously, regimental and divisional combat engineers laid track-ways and set up crossings over ice for tanks providing close infantry support.

When the enemy assumed the strategy of creating strongpoints and building rear defensive lines containing a large number of earth-and-timber emplacements, the need arose for blocking and destroying fire positions and enemy tanks in emplacements. Sometimes assault groupings consisting of automatic riflemen, combat engineers and gunners were created to destroy powerful enemy fire positions (20th Army, Western Front).

Attempting to delay the advance of Soviet troops that had broken through the defensive lines, the Germans mined the roads and demolished bridges and various hydraulic engineering structures. Under these conditions the efforts of the army and frontal engineer units were channeled mainly into restoring and maintaining the routes of troop movement. Thus when the 16th Army, Western Front went over to the counteroffensive, two out of three of the army's battalions supported troop movement on the Volokolamsk and Pyatninsk highways. In all, more than 50 percent of the entire strength of frontal engineer troops were used for road maintenance.¹³

Because the counteroffensive and the general offensive were conducted in winter in the battle of Moscow, the engineer troops did not receive much practice in supporting the crossing of water obstacles. But this mission became rather important in

zones of advance of some of the armies, especially when the enemy demolished hydraulic engineering structures. This problem had to be solved by formations of the 16th Army in connection with the enemy's demolition of the hydraulic power system at Istra. Its rifle subunits crossed on assault bridges, while tanks and artillery crossed on a low bridge 46 meters long, which was built within 24 hours by personnel of the 461st Combat Engineer Battalion despite intense enemy fire.¹⁴

Heavy tanks crossed over floating bridges laid over water cleared of ice with explosive charges. For example such a bridge was laid across the Volga near Kalinin specifically for KV tanks by pontoon builders of the 57th Separate Pontoon-and-Bridge Battalion.¹⁵

During the offensive, the enemy's counterattacks and counterthrusts were repelled mainly by formations of the assault echelon, which were often compelled to go over to defensive action. This significantly reduced the rate of advance of the troops. In such cases the troop commanders of the fronts and armies took steps to quickly secure the attained lines and cover the flanks of the advancing troops against the enemy's counterattacking tanks. Thus during the general offensive two engineer battalions (the 157th Separate Engineer Motorized Battalion and the 89th Separate Pontoon-and-Bridge Battalion) were given the mission of laying minefields along the left flank of the 16th Army's offensive grouping. They laid 15,000 antitank and antipersonnel mines.¹⁶

The army reserve was made up of the 499th Separate Combat Engineer Battalion, which operated as a "mobile army group for securing gains." Its mission was to erect obstacles as important objectives (major population centers) were captured.

Every rifle division in major formations of the Western Front was allocated up to one combat engineer company together with 800-1,000 antitank mines and 80-100 low wire entanglement kits for the purposes of setting up obstacles.

However, the low availability of motor vehicles in the engineer troops and the shortage of engineer munitions meant that when our troops went over to defense, they did not always have the necessary men and equipment to secure attained lines. All of this was one of the reasons why some formations were forced to abandon their defense lines and areas in response to strikes by mobile enemy reserves in the western sector during the concluding phase of the general offensive (March-April 1942).

During the counteroffensive and the general offensive Soviet engineer troops fulfilled a large volume of engineer missions. Thus in support of the offensive of combined-arms armies in January-March 1942, just engineer units of the Western Front scouted and set up 58 ice crossings for tanks and artillery, laid 5,387 km of track-ways, built 118 low wooden bridges with a capacity of up to 60 tons and disarmed and disposed of 21,644 enemy mines.¹⁷

The significant contribution made by engineer troops to the enemy's defeat in the battle of Moscow is obvious. During defense at the approaches to the capital and during the winter offensive of the Soviet Army, the remarkable qualities of our soldiers manifested themselves with new force: Limitless love for the motherland, steadfastness and stubbornness in combat, and high proficiency and heroism, all displayed on a massive scale. Tens of thousands of warriors and commanders, to

include soldiers of engineer troops, were awarded orders and medals. Engineer troop units distinguished themselves in combat as well. Eleven combat engineer battalions and other special engineer units were awarded the honorary Guards title.

The battle of Moscow occupies a special place in the development of Soviet military engineering art during the Great Patriotic War. During the savage engagements, the importance of support to the engineer troops and of the combat activities of these troops to success against a strong and insidious enemy revealed itself to its full extent. The rich experience that was gained, and generalized in an order dated 28 November 1941, made it possible to improve engineer services in the troops. The engineer units and subunits began to be used more purposefully and, as a rule, for their intended purpose. Their coordination with infantry, artillery and tanks on the battlefield was improved significantly.

The battle of Moscow made it clear what the missions of engineer troops should be in both defensive and offensive operations.

The experience acquired in this battle was an important source of further development of the combat use of engineer troops. This experience is of some interest today as well.

This is primarily true of principles such as creating a strategic reserve of engineer troops, raising the degree to which engineer forces and resources are massed, and their inclusion in all echelons of the combat formation and the operational organization of armies and fronts. The need for creating and using operational obstacle construction groups and mobile antitank engineer reserves revealed itself. These units became the prototype of the mobile obstacle construction detachments that came into broad use in subsequent operations of the Soviet Armed Forces.

Footnotes

1. Rifle divisions contained separate combat engineer battalions, regiments had combat engineer platoons, and rifle brigades had separate combat engineer companies.
2. "Velikaya Otechestvennaya voyna Sovetskogo Soyuza 1941-1945. Kratkaya istoriya" [Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union 1941-1945. A Short History], Voenizdat, 1970, p 117.
3. "Inzhenernyye voyska v boyakh za Sovetskuyu Rodinu" [Engineer Troops in Battles for the Soviet Motherland], Voenizdat, 1970, p 93.
4. "Inzhenernyye voyska v boyakh za Sovetskuyu Rodinu," p 97.
5. Anfilov, V. A., "Proval 'blitzkriга'" [Failure of the "Blitzkrieg"], Moscow, Nauka, 1974, p 560.
6. "Inzhenernyye voyska v boyakh za Sovetskuyu Rodinu," p 97.
7. "Istoriya voyn i voyennogo iskusstva" [History of Wars and Art of War], Voenizdat, 1970, p 159.

8. TsAMO, f. 69, op. 12114, d. 4, l. 15 (for greater detail on the actions of this group, see VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 10, 1981, pp 59-64).
9. "Inzhenernyye voyska v boyakh za Sovetskuyu Rodinu," pp 99-100.
10. For greater detail see VOYENNO-INZHENERNYY ZHURNAL, No 11, 1957, p 41.
11. "Sbornik boyevykh dokumentov Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny" [Collection of Combat Documents of the Great Patriotic War], Issue 5, Moscow, 1947, pp 26-27; VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 12, 1978, pp 39-40.
12. "Inzhenernyye voyska v boyakh za Sovetskuyu Rodinu," p 102.
13. "Inzhenernyye voyska v boyakh za Sovetskuyu Rodinu," p 105.
14. TsAMO, f. 358, op. 15770, d. 6, l. 93.
15. Ibid., f. 69, op. 14065, d. 29, ll. 170, 183.
16. Ibid., op. 12111, d. 715, ll. 106-107.
17. "Inzhenernyye voyska v boyakh za Sovetskuyu Rodinu," p 103.

Signal Troops

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 1, Jan 82 (signed to press 25 Dec 81) pp 32-36

[Article, title as above, by Chief of Communications of the Armed Forces and Deputy Chief of the General Staff Mar Sig Trps A. Belov]

[Text] Military signalmen made a definite contribution to the victory at Moscow, supporting troop command and control in difficult defensive engagements, during the counteroffensive and in the subsequent general offensive of the Soviet Army. The combat experience acquired by signal troops in the battle of Moscow was broadly employed in subsequent operations of the Great Patriotic War. Nor has it lost its significance today.

The conditions for organizing and maintaining communications were improbably difficult during the defensive engagement at the far and near approaches to Moscow. The surprise attack by Nazi Germany upon the Soviet Union did not permit a possibility for mobilizing the signal units of the fronts, armies and divisions or of the People's Commissariat of Communications. The availability of the basic communication resources was low in the major formations, formations and units, not exceeding 35-50 percent of the authorized requirement. There were not enough radios, and a shortage of field cable, telephones and storage batteries could be felt. Frontal and army communication was based mainly on the state network of permanent aerial transmission lines and communication centers, which were partially destroyed by bombing raids conducted by enemy aviation, which had air supremacy at the beginning of the war. Because the line operation units of the fronts, armies and the People's Commissariat of Communications were undermanned, the rate of their restoration was low.

At the same time the possibilities of the rather well developed network of line communication in Moscow and its suburbs was far from fully utilized for defensive purposes, since there was no centralized leadership over the lines, which belonged to different people's commissariats and departments (People's Commissariat of Communications, People's Commissariat of Defense, People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, People's Commissariat of Railways, the Main Administration of the Civil Air Fleet, the Metropolitan etc.). Institution of the position of special official of the People's Commissar of Defense and the People's Commissar of Communications to coordinate control of these lines in November 1941 made it possible to significantly improve the use of the existing state communication network to control the fronts and armies.

The conditions under which the Soviet troops had to conduct their defensive operations had an enormous influence on the organization of communications. The problem was that the broad defense zones and the forced withdrawal of the troops made it necessary to maneuver subunits, communication centers and communication lines quickly, but neither the staffs nor the signal units supporting them were completely ready for this. All of this created extreme hardships in the work of the signal troops, often leading to interruptions in communication, as a result of which the staffs were unable to promptly receive reliable information on the actions of their troops and on the troops of the enemy. In these exceptionally difficult conditions the command of the fronts and armies persistently sought ways to increase the stability and continuity of communications in support of troop command and control.

As the troops withdrew, as a rule the staffs moved to areas with a rather well developed network of permanent aerial transmission lines. If the situation permitted, the communications in the new locations of the control posts were prepared beforehand. Auxiliary communication centers were deployed along the routes of possible troop withdrawal. The personnel of these centers helped to restore the lines and to establish communication with the withdrawing troops. Later on, control post communication centers were based at some of the auxiliary communication centers.

As the defense front became stable, as experience was acquired and as the fronts and armies received new signal units formed in the country's rear, the organization of line communication was significantly improved, and communication became more stable in the course of the defensive engagement at Moscow. Decisive steps were taken to raise the stability of radio communication at all levels of control. On 23 July 1941 the People's Commissar of Defense published a special order, "On Improving the Work of Communications in the Red Army," which noted: "The war experience has demonstrated that unsatisfactory troop command and control is to a significant extent the result...of ignoring radio communication.... Understatement of radio communication as...the principal resource of troop command and control is the result of...the conservatism of our staffs, their failure to understand the significance of radio communication in mobile forms of modern combat.... Well organized, efficiently operating communication is a guarantee of victory over the enemy."¹ The order required commanders of all ranks and all staff officers to personally learn the art of controlling troops by radio and to teach their subordinates to do the same.

In compliance with the requirements of this order, personal radio sets were furnished to all commanders in the fronts, armies and divisions, down to division level

inclusively. One of the first models of such radio sets, which were installed in motor vehicles, was the personal radio set carried by 16th Army Commander K. K. Rokossovskiy, allowing him to maintain direct communication with the frontal commander and staff, with his own staff and with the commanders of subordinate divisions whenever he toured the troops.²

An order published by the troop commander of the Western Front on 21 December 1941, "On Eliminating Shortcomings in the Use of Radio Resources," played a great role in improving the work of radio communications. In addition to other important measures, it emphasized the need for raising the qualifications of radio operators, assigning them to the signal units and reinforcing radio discipline. Class ratings were introduced for radio operators; later on, these ratings were adopted by all of the Soviet Army.

It was at the battle of Moscow that radio communication was organized for the first time between the General Staff and the armies--that is, at one level of command lower. Later on, such communication was extended to all levels of control. This method of organizing radio communication allowed the General Headquarters, commanders and their staffs to gain a better knowledge of the situation, to lead subordinate troops more efficiently during combat activities, and when necessary to assume control of not only the directly subordinated major formations, formations and units but also those one level lower in the chain of command.

The need and importance of organizing such communications are confirmed by the following example. In the beginning of October 1941 the command post of the Bryansk Front was subjected to a massive attack by enemy aviation. The frontal command and staff temporarily lost control over its troops. Having communication with the armies, the General Headquarters assumed control. As a result the front's major formations withdrew to a rear line of defense in organized fashion and halted the enemy's advance there.

Effective interaction among all participants in the engagements--fronts, armies, formations and units of the different arms, branches of troops and special troops--acquired decisive significance to success. In addition to using radio networks and radio links for this purpose, as the troops received more radio resources the command began creating special radio networks and, in certain cases, coordination radio links, which enjoyed broad application and further development during subsequent years of the war.

The Western Front's radio center was one of the first to use a fundamentally new means of maintaining radio communication--the radio bureau method. This method essentially entailed creating a special center (a radio bureau) located right at the command post and possessing radio receivers, remote transmitter control resources and switching apparatus. The radio stations themselves were located several kilometers from the command post, and they were controlled and used centrally from the radio bureau by remote control lines. This made it possible to raise the effectiveness with which radio resources were used, to prevent detection of command posts by enemy reconnaissance and to reduce the total demand for transmitters.³

Thus in the battle of Moscow radio communication won the general recognition of the staffs as one of the most mobile resources for supporting troop command and

control in the complex conditions of a combat situation. The growing scale of its use can be deduced from the fact that by the beginning of the counteroffensive the communication center belonging to the People's Commissariat of Defense was maintaining direct radio communication with all fronts and with almost all armies.⁴ The staff of the Western Front maintained greater communication with the General Staff using a network linking together the radio stations of the Kalinin, Southwestern and later the Bryansk fronts. The Western Front maintained radio communication with all of the staffs of its armies and reserve formations through seven networks linking together the command post radio stations and the auxiliary control posts. This made it possible to transfer control of the armies from a command post to an auxiliary control post at any time.⁵

The signal troops had to perform difficult missions during the counteroffensive started in December 1941 by troops of the Western and Kalinin fronts and the right wing of the Southwestern Front. This was not the usual sort of offensive operation, organized in the course of a lengthy preparatory period; instead, it was prepared for during savage defensive engagements. Stable communication had to be maintained simultaneously with major formations and formations in direct contact with the enemy, with troops undergoing regrouping and with troops coming to the front from the Supreme High Command's reserve.

One unique feature that directly influenced the organization of control and communication was the significant increase in the strength of fronts and armies participating in the counteroffensive.

For example by the beginning of the counteroffensive the Western Front contained 10 combined-arms armies, each having from 6 to 16 divisions and brigades.⁶

The increase in strength of the fronts and armies required the signal units to expend significantly more effort and resources and work much more efficiently. The communication system of the front and its armies now covered a sizeable area. Thus the length of communication links with armies on the flanks (the 1st Strike, 49th, 50th and 10th) attained 160-200 km and more.

At the beginning of the counteroffensive communication in the Headquarters-front and front-army links was organized using not less than two wire lines separated in space. Their routes were selected away from railroads and highways, and they avoided large population centers. Thus communication was maintained between the staff of the Western Front and the army staffs by communication links consisting of two or three lines following different routes.⁷

The distance between the army control posts, which often changed their locations, and the staff of the Western Front, which did not change its area of deployment, constantly increased during the offensive. Organization of communication between the frontal staff and the armies using individual links required the use of significant amounts of men and equipment, and it did not always allow for the needed rate of line construction. This was one of the reasons why a transition was made from organizing communications on the basis of individual links to organizing communications on the basis of arteries with auxiliary communication centers deployed along them. The auxiliary communication centers were used to provide communication with several armies. Thus on 23 December 1941 an auxiliary center

was deployed in the vicinity of Novo-Petrovskoye. Through it, the staff of the Western Front maintained communication with the 1st Strike and 20th and 16th armies. Somewhat later another two auxiliary centers were deployed: near Tula (to provide communication with the 10th and 50th armies and the I Guards Corps) and in the vicinity of Maloyaroslavets (for communication with the 33d, 43d and 49th armies).⁸

Large control post communication centers, auxiliary communication centers and control and testing points (intended mainly to control and test the conductors and the communication circuits) were joined together by lines, which made it possible to create communication bypasses and afforded possibilities for maneuvering the lines and conductors.

Mobile communication resources (motor vehicles, motorcycles, airplanes, mounted and foot messengers, skiers) had an important place in troop command and control. Colonel D. T. Kulyupin, the communication chief for the 10th Army, Western Front, later wrote: "The snowy and extremely cold winter of 1941 compelled us to resort to broad use of pony express as a form of communication. The army command allocated two cavalry squadrons for this purpose, which made it possible to enjoy uninterrupted delivery of operational documents to the army formations and units."⁹

In the defense of Moscow and during the counteroffensive, soldiers of the signal units and subunits made it possible for the command to control the troops in the complex conditions of the combat situation, displaying courage, valor and heroism in this effort.

Sergeant N. S. Novikov of the 28th Guards Separate Signal Battalion, 16th Army committed an immortal act of heroism. At the end of November 1941, while he was repairing damage to a line, he was wounded by German automatic riflemen. Clenching the ends of the cable in his teeth, N. S. Novikov attempted to return the fire of the attacking fascists. But the forces were unequal. Mortally wounded, he lay there on Moscow soil, with the cable clenched in his teeth. The line, which was restored by him in this tragic way, continued to operate. For this act of heroism Sergeant N. S. Novikov was awarded the Order of the Red Banner post mortem.

Signalmen under the command of Junior Lieutenant Sh. Ismagilov, commander of a signal platoon, displayed selflessness and steadfastness during defense of the approaches to the capital of our motherland. On 2 October 1941 the enemy made a desperate attempt to drive a wedge into the defenses of the 2d Rifle Regiment, 50th Rifle Division, 19th Army. Penetrating through the combat formations of the battalions, a group of enemy tanks rushed toward the regiment's observation post. Joining the battle, Junior Lieutenant Sh. Ismagilov and telephone operators A. N. Kuznetsov, V. I. Kamov and A. S. Kalayev burned and damaged nine of the menacing vehicles with well-thrown Molotov cocktails and antitank grenades.¹⁰

The 12th Separate Signal Regiment had its first taste of glory in the battle of Moscow. For valor displayed in battles with the fascist German invaders, for steadfastness, bravery, discipline and organization and for the heroism of the personnel, the 12th Separate Signal Regiment was reorganized as the 1st Guards Separate Signal Regiment by an order of the People's Commissar of Defense published 8 January 1942.¹¹ The personnel of many other signal units acted selflessly and efficiently, keeping the communications alive. Frontal signal chiefs generals

N. D. Psurtsev, N. A. Borzov and I. T. Bulychev, army signal chiefs colonels P. Ya. Maksimenko, L. Ya. Belyshev, D. T. Kulyupin, I. P. Sokolov and P. K. Sedykh and many others competently led the troops subordinated to them. By their competent and heroic actions in the battles at Moscow, the signal troops ensured continuous control of the troops and promoted the defeat of the fascist German hordes.

In conclusion, we should make note of the tremendous significance of the experience of organizing communications in the battle of Moscow. Introduction of personal radio sets for commanders, organization of radio communication one level lower down the chain of command, organization of wire communication in arteries, centralized use of radio communication in the radio bureau method and other principles that were first attempted in this period were the foundation for improvements in communications during subsequent operations of the Great Patriotic War. This experience enriched the practice of organizing communications with new principles and promoted the development of the theory and practice of military communications in the postwar years. Some of these principles are still significant today.

Footnotes

1. TsAMO SSSR, f. 208, op. 2617, d. 10, ll. 121-123.
2. Peresyphkin, I. T., "Voyennaya radiosvyaz'" [Military Radio Communication], Voenizdat, 1962, p 239.
3. "Voyennyye svyazisty v dni voyny i mira" [Military Signalmen in Days of War and Peace], Voenizdat, 1968, p 156.
4. Peresyphkin, I. T., Op. cit., p 175.
5. "Voyennyye svyazisty v dni voyny i mira," pp 155-156.
6. TsAMO, f. 208, op. 2617, d. 7, l. 176.
7. Ibid., op. 10170, d. 49, l. 125.
8. "Istoriya razvitiya voysk svyazi" [History of the Development of the Signal Troops], Voenizdat, 1980, p 139.
9. VOYENNNYY SVYAZIST, No 1, 1957, p 6.
10. TsAMO, f. 1159, op. 1, d. 74, l. 196.
11. "Istoriya razvitiya voysk svyazi," p 136.

Airborne Troops

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 1, Jan 82 (signed to press 25 Dec 81 pp 37-43)

[Article, title as above, by Commander of Airborne Troops Col Gen D. Sukhorukov]

/Text/ The Soviet airborne troops made a significant contribution to the defeat of fascist German invaders at Moscow. Being highly mobile, they made tangible strikes

at the enemy both in the defensive operations and during the counteroffensive of the Soviet troops.

Operating jointly with soldiers of other branches of troops, during the defensive engagements the paratroopers kept enemy groupings from advancing to the capital, supported the advance and deployment of reserve formations on lines of defense, plugged holes in the defenses and completed other important missions.

The combat activities of formations of V Airborne Corps (commander, S. S. Gur'yev) of the reserve of the Supreme High Command General Headquarters in October 1941 at Mtsensk are instructive. The corps was given the mission of stopping the advance of Guderian's tank troops in the Orel-Tula sector and supporting concentration of units of General D. D. Lelyushenko's I Guards Rifle Corps and the 4th and 11th tank brigades. The paratroopers were landed during 3 October and in the first half of 4 October.

The first to stand in the enemy's path were the forward subunits of the 2d Battalion, 201st Airborne Brigade (commander, Colonel S. M. Kovalev), which landed on 3 October at an airfield near Orel. On that same day paratroopers of the 3d Battalion, who landed at the Optukha airfield, went into action against the enemy. They cut the Orel-Mtsensk highway at the Optukha-Ivanovskaya line and stubbornly held their positions.

On 4 October the 1st Battalion, 201st Airborne Brigade and paratroopers of the 10th Airborne Brigade were landed in the vicinity of Mtsensk. On the same day Colonel M. Ye. Katukov's 4th Tank Brigade reached Mtsensk as well. By the end of 5 October units of the I Guards Rifle Corps and Lieutenant Colonel V. A. Bondarev's 11th Tank Brigade as well as subunits of the 132d Border Regiment completed unloading at Mtsensk.

On 5 and 6 October the 3d Battalion, 201st Airborne Brigade withdrew together with tank crews of the 4th Tank Brigade to a line passing through the towns of Naryshkino, Pervyy Voin and Slobodka, where they successfully repelled an enemy attack. By the morning of 7 October, utilizing a mobile defense and operating from ambush, paratroopers and soldiers of the I Guards Rifle Corps, the 4th and 11th tank brigades and the 132d Border Regiment occupied defenses on a line extending from Golovlevo to Sheino. In the second half of the day they repelled a massed attack of the fascists in this sector of the front, destroying 39 enemy tanks.

Soviet paratroopers fought savage battles at Mtsensk together with tank crews, border troops and soldiers of the I Guards Rifle Corps in subsequent days as well. They inflicted large losses upon the enemy and retarded his advance toward Tula.

On 17 October units of the V Airborne Corps were withdrawn from combat and transferred to the vicinity of Podol'sk by rail and motor transport on a rush basis. Together with troops of the 43d Army, the paratroopers participated in meeting engagements, they operated from ambushes, and they struck the flank and rear of the advancing enemy. They stood their ground to the death on a line along the Nara River, 46 km southwest of Podol'sk.

In almost this same period of time a detachment of paratroopers commanded by Captain I. G. Starchak was fighting the enemy on the Ugra River. Occupying defenses on a line 205 km from Moscow, at first independently and then in coordination with cadets of the Podol'sk Artillery School, for 5 days, until tank reinforcements arrived, it heroically fought enemy tanks attempting to reach Moscow by way of the Warsaw Highway. Although the enemy had an overwhelming superiority in forces, between 4 and 9 October he was able to advance only 25 km in this direction.

During the counteroffensive at Moscow and the general offensive of the Soviet troops the Supreme High Command General Headquarters transferred airborne formations to the fronts, which used them as tactical and operational assault forces and in actions jointly with other troops of the front.

The principal missions of the airborne troops were: assisting frontal troops to encircle enemy groupings and penetrating enemy defenses with thrusts from the rear directed toward advancing Soviet units; capturing enemy airfields to permit the landing of airlanded assault forces; reinforcing friendly troops encircled in the enemy rear and assisting them to break out of the encirclement, etc.

The first tactical airborne assault force was dropped during the counteroffensive at Moscow in the night of 15 December 1941 on order of the troop commander of the Western Front, Army General G. K. Zhukov. In mid-December troops of the 30th and 1st strike armies enveloped the enemy's Klin troop grouping. Fearing encirclement, the enemy began withdrawing from Klin to Volokolamsk on the only road left in his hands, leading to Teryayeva Sloboda. It was here that paratroopers of 214th Airborne Brigade under the command of Captain I. G. Starchak were dropped. They cut the Klin-Volokolamsk road, destroyed its bridges and communication lines, and blocked the routes of retreat of the Germans. Abandoning their equipment, the enemy troops were forced to retreat on country roads. The fascists were able to break westward out of Klin only as small groups. Operating in the enemy's rear, the paratroopers made tangible thrusts for 6 days. On 25 December they linked up with troops advancing from the front in the Volokolamsk-Klin sector.

In the second half of January 1942 an assault force consisting of the 1st and 2d battalions of the 201st Airborne Brigade and the 250th Rifle Regiment was parachute-dropped and airlanded in the territory of the Western Front with the objective of supporting the successful advance of the I Guards Cavalry Corps, promoting the westward progress of the 33d Army and rendering assistance to frontal troops attempting to destroy the enemy's strong Yukhnov-Myatlevo grouping. The assault force was headed by the commander of the 250th Rifle Regiment, Major N. L. Soldatov. In the night of 18-19 January 1942 battalions of the 201st Airborne Brigade landed in the vicinity of Znamenka, Zhelan'ye and Lugi (in Smolenskaya Oblast). Capturing these towns, they prepared a landing strip which airplanes used to land subunits of the 250th Rifle Regiment in the course of three nights (20, 21 and 22 January). Waging hard battles with the enemy, the paratroopers not only held the landing area but also halted the enemy's advance on the Yukhnov-Vyaz'ma road. Subunits of the 201st Airborne Brigade commanded by Captain I. A. Surzhik linked up with General P. A. Belov's cavalry on 28 January. On 30 January the I Cavalry Corps reached the area of operations of the assault group's main forces. Together with it, the paratroopers continued the advance toward Vyaz'ma.

Later on the 1st and 2d battalions of the 201st Airborne Brigade operated in the enemy rear in the composition of the 8th Airborne Brigade, which was dropped in late January.

On the whole, this assault force completed its mission successfully. It cut and held highly important roads in the rear of the German Yuhnov grouping for several days, constrained the grouping's maneuver, disturbed the work of its rear services and thus facilitated the offensive actions of the Western Front's troops.

On 17 February 1942 an airborne assault force consisting of the 4th Parachute Battalion (500 men), 204th Airborne Brigade, commanded by Senior Lieutenant P. L. Belotserkovskiy, was dropped within the zone of advance of the Kalinin Front. The mission of the assault force was to reinforce troops of the 29th Army sealed off by the enemy in an area west of Rzhev and helping them to break out of the encirclement. This mission was completed successfully by the paratroopers.

Thus the Soviet command used tactical airborne forces in the counteroffensive at Moscow to prevent the enemy's orderly withdrawal to new defensive lines, to prevent the approach of his reserves to the front, to assist advancing troops in the penetration of enemy defenses and to reinforce surrounded troops. As a rule the airborne forces were dropped at night deep in the German defenses. And although significant enemy forces were often present in their landing areas, the enemy's garrisons were practically isolated from one another due to large snowdrifts on the roads. Therefore, using skis, the paratroopers could reach the deployment areas of the enemy's units and subunits by surprise, and inflict large losses on the Germans.

The composition of a tactical airborne assault landing force depended on the missions and the situation. It usually included up to a battalion. Only the assault landing force commanded by Major N. L. Soldatov contained five battalions, which permitted him to successfully complete his operational-tactical mission.

Also instructive is the experience of using a large airborne assault landing force in the enemy rear.

Thus to complete the encirclement of the enemy's Vyaz'ma troop grouping by the Kalinin and Western fronts, on 15 January 1942 the Supreme High Command General Headquarters decided to land the IV Airborne Corps under the command of Major General A. F. Levashov in the vicinity of Zarechna, southwest of Vyaz'ma, with the mission of cutting the Vyaz'ma-Smolensk railroad and highway.¹

On 15 January 1942 Major General V. A. Glazunov, commander of the airborne troops, was ordered to transfer the IV Airborne Corps to the troop commander of the Western Front and prepare it for a combat mission in the enemy rear. The forming-up place for the formation's assault landing was indicated as well--temporary airfields in the vicinity of Kaluga (Grabtsevo, Zhashkovo, Rzhavets). The plan for the airborne operation was developed by the staff of the airborne troops with the participation of the air force staff.

On 24 January Army General G. K. Zhukov, troop commander of the Western Front, gave the following mission to the assault landing force: "Comrade Levashov: Mission: 26-27 January, land the corps and occupy lines as shown on map. Objective--cut enemy's westward withdrawal."² The mission was described on a 1:100,000 map.

The corps commander decided to land the 8th Airborne Brigade first (commander, Colonel A. A. Onufriyev), and to use the 2d Parachute Battalion of this brigade as the forward detachment (battalion commander, Captain M. Ya. Karnaukhov). The first detachment was airlifted from Zhashkovo airfield on 27 January. Because orientation was difficult for the flight crew, the battalion was dropped 15-18 km south of its designated area, and scattered over an area with a radius of 20-25 km, which made assembly of the personnel and the search for the armament and cargo difficult. Communication with the battalion was lost. Later on, due to intense counteractions by enemy aviation, which struck the airfields in the forming-up place, units of the 8th Airborne Brigade were dropped only at night, though the drops still continued to be imprecise. As a result the subunits were scattered over a large area. In all, only 2,100 of the formation's personnel were dropped between 27 January and 2 February.³ Despite the unfavorable situation that evolved in the landing region, the formation's paratroopers immediately went to work on their mission. The brigade destroyed a number of enemy garrisons and captured many population centers. Its 3d Parachute Battalion conducted diversionary actions on the Vyaz'ma-Smolensk railroad and highway in the vicinity of Alferovo, Vysotskoye and Rebrovo.

The enemy began to sense the growing force of the thrusts by the paratroopers more and more strongly. General Halder, the chief of general staff of the German ground troops, noted the following in his diary: "The enemy is continuing to land airborne troops (west of Vyaz'ma). The enemy has still not been cleared from the Smolensk-Vyaz'ma highway and railroad. The troops of the 4th Army are in a very serious situation!"⁴ Even small groups of paratroopers attacked the enemy daringly and decisively. Here is a typical example. In the beginning of February 1942 a reconnaissance patrol consisting of three persons under the command of Senior Sergeant N. L. Azarnyy was scouting an enemy strongpoint set up in the town of Gvozdikovo. On approaching houses on the outskirts the patrol commander noticed that a fascist subunit (of about 40 men) was approaching the town from the opposite side with an antiaircraft gun. Boldly attacking the enemy, the paratroopers annihilated a significant number of the Germans with automatic rifle fire and grenades, and they captured the antiaircraft gun, 382 shells for it, horses and weapons. Fascists remaining alive abandoned their wounded and fled.

Here is another example of competent and decisive actions by assault landing forces in the enemy rear. Battalion Commissar I. P. Mazurkevich, who was dropped 40 km from the brigade's main forces, brought small groups of paratroopers together and, coordinating their actions with partisans that were operating in this area, destroyed the enemy garrison in Dorogobuzh with a night attack. The attack was such a surprise that the enemy was unable to offer serious resistance, and he fled the city, abandoning food and ammunition dumps.

In late January and early February the forward units of General P. A. Belov's I Guards Cavalry Corps began arriving in the area of operations of the 8th Airborne Brigade. The brigade was placed within the composition of the corps, and it engaged fascist German troops in the vicinity of Dorogobuzh, Vyaz'ma and Spas-Demensk in combat. Evaluating the brigade's actions, Army General G. K. Zhukov, the troop commander of the Western Front, noted the following in an order to the frontal troops: "The airborne brigade is an example to all of the troops."⁵

At the beginning of February 1942 the enemy was still in control of Rzhev and Sychevka. Units of the XI Cavalry Corps reached the Moscow-Minsk highway, but they were unable to interdict the enemy's lines of communication west of Vyaz'ma. The 33d Army, Western Front, which was advancing toward Vyaz'ma, soon found itself cut off from the front's troops and was compelled to fight heavy battles while encircled. The I Guards Cavalry Corps managed to reach Vyaz'ma, but it could not link up with the XI Cavalry Corps and the 33d Army. The enemy reinforced his troops by transferring large forces from West Europe, he became more aggressive, and he made several counterthrusts against troops of the 33d Army and the I Guards Cavalry Corps.

Thus although there was a large grouping of our troops operating in the enemy rear, it was not strong enough to defeat the opposing enemy and complete the encirclement of the main forces of Army Group Center. In this situation, further landing of troops of the IV Airborne Corps west of Vyaz'ma was deemed unsuitable, and it was halted on 1 February.

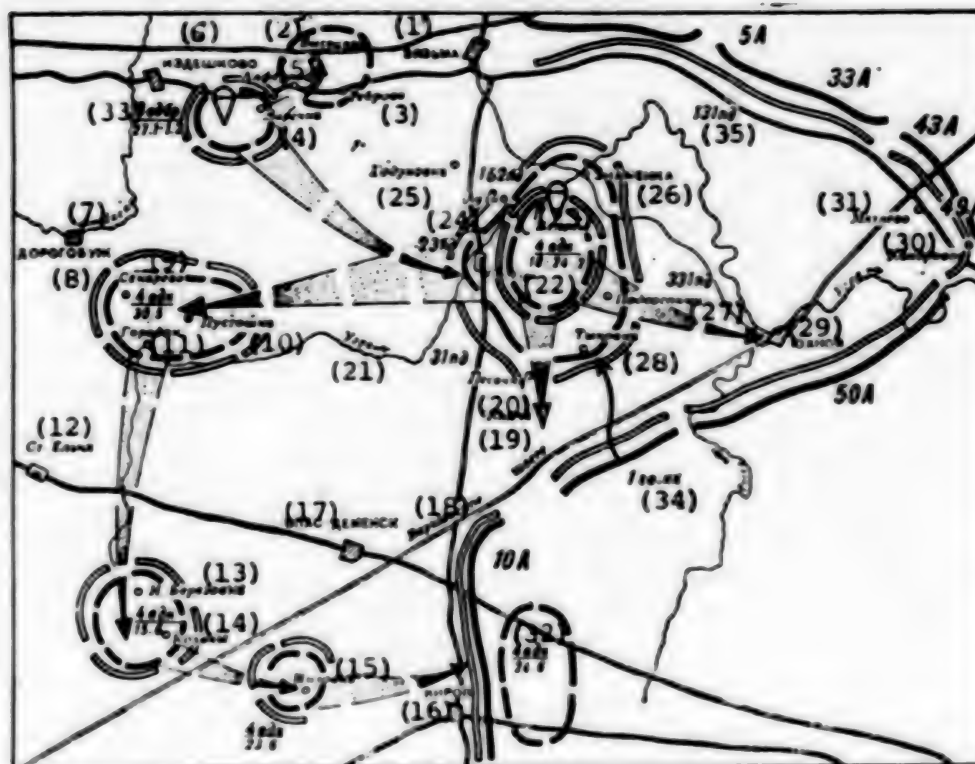
A directive published by General Headquarters on 16 February required mobilization of all forces of the Kalinin and Western fronts to complete the defeat of Army Group Center.

To assist troops of the Western Front in the defeat of the Yuhnov grouping, the Soviet command decided to land the IV Airborne Corps (less the 8th Airborne Brigade) together with reinforcing units in an area west of Yuhnov.⁶ The formation was once again subordinated to the troop commander of the Western Front, and it was given the mission of penetrating the enemy front from the rear in the vicinity of Pesochnya, reaching a line extending through Klyuchi, Tynovka and Leonovo, and linking up with units of the 50th Army for joint combat activities against the enemy's Yuhnov grouping.

The corps was airlifted from a number of airfields in the Moscow vicinity, to include from Vnukovo. The airlift operation was covered against strikes by enemy aviation by the men and equipment of the Moscow Antiaircraft Zone. Because there were few transporters (41 PS-84 airplanes and 23 TB-3 airplanes) and because the weather was unfavorable, it took six nights to land the 9th and 214th airborne brigades, the 4th Parachute Battalion, 8th Airborne Brigade, and corps units. By 24 February 612 sorties had been flown, and 7,373 men had been dropped together with 1,525 parcels containing armament, ammunition, food and other gear.⁷

The corps' offensive, which began in the night of 25 February, developed slowly. The harsh and snowy winter hindered the movement of the subunits. Because the weather would not permit flying, aviation could not support the airborne offensive. The paratroopers struck the enemy mainly in surprise night attacks.

Surmounting organized enemy defenses, by 28 February the corps' unit advanced 20-25 km toward troops of the 50th Army, captured several population centers and reached the vicinity of Klyuchi, Gorbachi and Tynovka. The 50th Army could not break the resistance of the Germans on the Warsaw Highway and join up with the assault forces (see diagram). Under these conditions the IV Airborne Corps was forced to go over to defense on its attained line and to conduct defensive combat until mid-April. As was noted earlier, from the end of January 1941 to April 1942



Combat Activities of the IV Airborne Corps From 27 January to 24 June 1942

Key:

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Vyaz'ma | 19. Klyuchi |
| 2. Vysotskoye | 20. Pesochnya |
| 3. Rebrovo | 21. Ugra |
| 4. Zarechna | 22. Ugra Station |
| 5. Alferovo | 23. Zhelan'ye |
| 6. Izdeshkovo | 24. Lugi |
| 7. Dniepr | 25. Godunovka |
| 8. Dorogobuzh | 26. Znamenka |
| 9. Sekarevo | 27. Podsosonki |
| 10. Pustoshka | 28. Tynovka |
| 11. Gorodok | 29. Yukhnov |
| 12. Yel'nya Station | 30. Kondrovo |
| 13. N. Berezovka | 31. Myatlevo |
| 14. Kokhany | 32. IV Airborne Corps |
| 15. Shilovka | 33. 8th Airborne Brigade |
| 16. Kirov | 34. I Guards Cavalry Corps |
| 17. Spas-Demensk | 35. Infantry Division |
| 18. Warsaw Highway | |

the 8th Air Brigade fought in the enemy rear, independently at first and then in coordination with units of the I Guards Cavalry Corps. On 3 April 1942 it joined up with the main forces of the IV Airborne Corps. The corps' units conducted diversionary actions on the roads, they mined parts of them, and they raided transporters, dumps and small garrisons, tying up significant enemy forces. Jointly with the I Guards Cavalry Corps and partisans they managed to capture, and hold for a long period of time, a sizeable area south of Vyaz'ma, containing up to five German infantry divisions.⁸

The corps continued to fight in the enemy rear together with the I Guards Cavalry Corps until 24 June 1942. These formations broke through the enemy defenses and linked up with units of the 10th Army, Western Front north of the city of Kirov, Kaluzhskaya Oblast. In the almost 6 months of hard fighting in the enemy rear the paratroopers temporarily liberated up to 200 population centers, they traveled more than 600 km in the rear of the fascist German troops, and they annihilated up to 15,000 enemy enlisted men and officers, and much military equipment.¹⁰

The actions of the IV Airborne Corps at Vyaz'ma and Yukhnov came to be called the Vyaz'ma airborne operation, being the first operation of this sort in the history of Soviet art of war. Preparations for and the actual conduct of this major assault landing proceeded in a complex operational situation, in winter, and at night. The greatest difficulties in organizing and conducting the operation were associated with landing the troops. After all, if it were to be landed in one sortie, the corps would have required more than 600 airplanes, and it was allocated only 64. Working at peak effort, it would have taken at least 10 days for this number of airplanes to land the whole corps; if possible losses are considered, the time can be significantly longer. Naturally, this could not ensure surprise in the assault landing.

Mention should also be made of the almost complete absence of support to the combat activities of the landing force by aviation, which it required both during the landing phase and especially in the course of its combat activities. Nor was the landing force's interaction with the front's advancing troops organized in due fashion. Even in cases where the distance between the landing force attacking from the rear and the advancing troops was insignificant, as a rule the landing force was not supported with artillery fire.

The corps' medical service had a heavy burden. Qualified medical care was rendered to more than 3,500 wounded paratroopers in the difficult conditions of the harsh snowy winter of 1941/1942. In this case two thirds of the wounded were returned to fighting after treatment. More than 800 paratroopers were air-evacuated to the rear.

Summarizing the results of using tactical and operational airborne assault forces in the battle of Moscow, we should note that they did make a certain contribution to the defeat of the fascist German troops. The distinguishing features of the actions of the paratroopers were their exceptional persistence and stubbornness in the pursuit of their missions, high combat proficiency and complete devotion to the Communist Party and the socialist motherland.

Soviet airborne troops have now transformed into a highly mobile branch of troops capable of executing not only tactical and operational but also operational-strategic missions in the enemy rear. However, the experience of using them in the battle of Moscow has not lost significance in modern conditions. Important missions today include preventing the advance of any enemy grouping that breaks through and providing assistance to frontal troops in its encirclement; closing breaches formed in the defenses; setting up ambushes; covering the flanks of major formations; capturing airfields, and so on. Careful study of the use of airborne troops in the battle of Moscow would make it easier to find new forms and methods of their combat use in modern operations.

Footnotes

1. "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945," Vol 4, Voenizdat, 1975, p 307.
2. VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 12, 1979, p 17.
3. "Istoriya Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny Sovetskogo Soyuza 1941-1945" [History of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union 1941-1945], Vol 2, Voenizdat, 1963, p 327.
4. Gal'der, F., "Voyennyy dnevnik" [War Diary], Vol 3, Book 2, Voenizdat, 1971, p 186.
5. TsAMO SSSR, f. 338, op. 2754, d. 14, l. 182.
6. "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945," Vol 4, p 312.
7. TsAMO, f. 35, op. 11280, d. 146, ll. 32, 35.
8. "Sovetskaya Voyennaya Entsiklopediya" [Soviet Military Encyclopedia], Vol 2, Voenizdat, 1976, p 446.
10. "Sovetskiye vozdushno-desantnyye. Voenno-istoricheskiy ocherk" [The Soviet Airborne Troops. An Outline of Their Military History], Voenizdat, 1980, p 136.

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WARTIME OPERATIONS: TANK REPAIR WORK DESCRIBED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 1, Jan 82 (signed to press 25 Dec 81) pp 54-58

[Article, published under the heading "Memoirs," by Engr-Maj Gen (Ret) A. Tarasenko: "Tank Repairmen in Battles Near Moscow"]

[Text] An extremely grave situation developed in the tank troops at the beginning of the battle of Moscow in connection with the losses of large numbers of tanks in the initial period of the war and with significant reduction of the manufacture of new vehicles due to evacuation of tank industry plants into the country's deep rear. Under these conditions restoring damaged tanks during combat and quickly placing them back into operation had very important significance.

There were many repair and evacuation resources together with the troops that were encircled west of Vyaz'ma. This significantly weakened the possibilities of the Western Front's Armored Force Directorate (ABTU). All that remained of the reinforcements at its disposal were three separate repair and reconstruction battalions (the 77th, 102d and 132d separate repair and reconstruction battalions). There was nothing with which to make up the great losses, and the chief of the front's ABTU, General I. Ye. Ivanin, began persistently requesting the Red Army Main Armored Force Directorate to strengthen the front with more repair resources.

Mobile repair bases (PRBs), formed in compliance with a decision of the State Defense Committee, began reaching the front in October. These were specialized repair units. Some of them repaired KV tanks, other repairs T-34s, the third group repaired T-26s and a fourth group worked on foreign tanks and armored transporters.

The repair and evacuation division of the ABTU had a small staff. At that time it included Military Engineer 1st Rank P. R. Semenkevich, Military Engineer 3d Rank N. Z. Spirin, Major A. Gurov, the author of this article* and other officers. In the complex situation which evolved in fall 1941 at Moscow, as with most other officers of the directorate, we spent most of our time in the units and formations, providing assistance locally to the troops in evacuating and repairing damaged tanks.

*During the period described here, Military Engineer 2d Rank A. U. Tarasenko worked in the Western Front's ABTU at a senior officer post in the repair and evacuation division.--Editor.

Through their selfless work, as a rule the tank repairmen got the damaged vehicles working again quickly. But evacuation of combat equipment from the battlefield turned out to be the weak link in tank maintenance. There were actually no tank evacuation resources in the front. Tanks were evacuated by resources available to the troops--low-power tractors. But even these were in short supply in the tank brigade. Organizing evacuation of damaged tanks during withdrawal is an extremely complex and dangerous undertaking. This is why the repairmen usually operated at night. Sometimes operational tanks had to be used to pull damaged vehicles out of the no-man's land. In their difficult work, the repairmen displayed initiative, boldness and resourcefulness.

In mid-October one of the repair companies of the 102d Special Repair and Reconstruction battalion was repairing damaged vehicles of the 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th tank brigades at a damaged motor vehicle collecting point (SPAM). They were able to restore the running gear of the one of the T-34s, but there was no gun--it had been damaged by a shell, and a new one was nowhere to be found. But a solution was nevertheless found. Not far from the SPAM, in the no-man's land, stood a damaged tank in a deep crater. It was impossible to evacuate it. And so we decided to dismount its gun. The company commander, Captain G. N. Plakatin, ordered the platoon commander to weld a sled together and take along a long cable, a log and a block and tackle. The plan of the operation was simple: Insert the log into the turret hatch, secure the block and tackle to it, and use the latter to lift the gun out. This was not the first time the repairmen used such a method to dismount a gun. This effort required boldness, caution and swiftness. The repair brigade drove out to the tank in a GAZ-AA truck at night. It was manned only by volunteers: the brothers Sokolov--weapon specialists, cousins N. Narsesyan and A. Arutyunov--installers, fitter I. P. Kurochkin and driver G. Cheremnykh. The brigade was headed by Captain G. N. Plakatin.

It was completely dark by the time our truck reached the forward trenches of our infantry. We quickly coordinated with the commander of the rifle company to provide fire cover if necessary. In turn, the rifle company commander warned the brigade that an enemy sniper sometimes stationed himself in the tank at night.

The log, block and tackle and the required tools were transferred from the truck to the sled, and the latter was dragged behind the brigade. The end of the cable was left tied to the truck. The 100 meters that had to be surmounted by crawling seemed like many kilometers. Finally the group reached the tank. Everyone went to work as planned. The weapon specialists quickly removed the bolts from the gun mantlet. The installers labored inside the tank. The gun was dismounted, hooked to the cable, removed from the turret without any special effort and lowered to the sled. At this moment the fascists discovered the daring repairmen and opened hurricane automatic and mortar fire. But then our mortars and guns opened responding fire at the enemy. Capitalizing on this, the repairmen clambered onto the sled, which the truck was already dragging out. The operation was completed successfully, without losses. The repairmen returned to the SPAM with a sense of satisfaction. By morning, fitter Kurochkin and his weapon specialists had already mounted the gun on the repaired tank.

At around the end of October I was with the 25th PRB, which was deployed west of Naro-Fominsk in a small birch grove. There were no mobile cranes here, and the

hoisting booms mounted inside the disassembly-assembly shop could only lift a motor or other similar tank units. Once during the work it became necessary to remove the turret from a tank. The repairmen once again quickly found a solution. A heavy duty block and tackle was suspended from a strong crossbeam tied high up between two trees so that a tank could pass beneath it. Using it, the repairmen lifted the turret and did their work of fitting the turret to the underlying armor.

Tanks were reconstructed at the base around the clock during those days. Once squad commander N. M. Levchenko, one of the best repairmen, was changing engines in a vehicle together with his subordinates beneath a tarpaulin awning in the light of a portable lamp. Next to them, fitter-installer P. F. Volovik was completing his work of exchanging gear boxes. A tractor brought up another damaged vehicle.

"Well, how are things going, Matvey Veniaminovich?" I asked the base chief, Junior Lieutenant Pozdnyakovskiy.

"It's taking everything we've got to scavenge some tanks to repair others," he replied. "It's really bad, there are no spare parts and machine units."

We all knew quite well how resourceful the repairmen had to be to scavenge the required parts, units and machine units. They inspected literally every burnt-out tank and removed all that could still work. More and more was done at the base to expand restoration and manufacture of tank parts locally--parts as large as simple machine units. Welding proceeded around the clock: Road wheels, idlers, and drive sprockets had to be welded, not to mention pierced armor. Two damaged radiators would be used to make one good one. And when tanks were sent to the plants for overhaul, all useable parts were removed, replacing them with those that could not be repaired in the field. All repairmen burned with one desire--to return larger numbers of the tanks back to action faster.

Direct control over the repair and reconstruction of armored equipment was exercised by I. S. Khokhlov, a member of the front's military council. Before the war Ivan Sergeyevich was the chairman of the RSFSR Council of People's Commissars. In the difficult days of Moscow's defense, Khokhlov provided significant assistance to the ABTU in locating frontal repair resources on the territory of evacuated Moscow plants. Here, in permanent conditions, using the plant cranes and all sorts of manufacturing materials, equipment could be repaired faster. Plant specialists were also brought in on occasion to provide assistance in tank reconstruction.

Khokhlov brought in several specialists from the RSFSR Council of People's Commissars to provide day-to-day assistance to the front's repair units--V. M. Babayev, Yu. A. Bobrov, L. M. Kirpichnikov, V. P. Kryuchkov and V. I. Smirnov. They helped to gain the cooperation of a trust of the Moscow City Soviet responsible for moving buildings and structures, together with all of its technical resources, transportation and personnel, in the effort to recover badly stuck tanks. Three evacuation detachments were created in the trust. These worked at the front until the first half of 1943. In all, more than 520 tanks were raised from rivers, canals, marshes and craters. This was the first time blocks and tackles were used extensively to evacuate badly stuck tanks. Later on special military units--separate detachments for evacuation of stuck tanks--were formed on the basis of the experience of these detachments.

November was unusually cold and windy. The repair of tanks in the open field, under enemy fire, required unbelievable physical and moral effort. Touching the icy metal, the workmen tore the skin from their palms. The best times were when the brigade had to work inside a tank, when rags soaked in solar oil were ignited to warm up the wrenches and tools. They labored without rest. The repairmen ate and slept on the run, in the full sense of the word. Many suffered from festering ulcers on their bodies caused by diesel fuel, which seeped into all clothing, even underwear. But they took no notice of their deprivations: Their burning hatred of the enemy increased their strength tenfold.

In mid-November the fascist command resumed its offensive on Moscow. Caring not for his losses, the enemy attacked with determination, attempting to break through to the city at all costs. The 23d, 27th and 28th tank brigades fought especially hard in the vicinities of Istra, Klin and Solnechnogorsk.

I caught up with the headquarters of the 23d Tank Brigade in Kutasovo. Here, at the outskirts of the town, the brigade's repair and reconstruction company was deployed. I was greeted by Major A. A. Molchanov, the brigade deputy commander for technical affairs. The brigade had suffered sizeable losses in the last few major defensive battles in the Volokolamsk sector--15 tanks. The damaged vehicles were concentrated in one place. This facilitated the transfer of tanks needing repairs to the front's repair units. The brigade was reinforced with two companies of English tanks and a company of T-60 tanks. And although the English vehicles were significantly inferior to our T-34s in combat qualities, the tank crews used them successfully in delaying tactics, making tangible blows on the Germans. But the engineers and technicians encountered many difficulties both in evacuating the foreign vehicles and also in repairing them. Because of the poor traction of the caterpillar tracks of the "Valentine" tank, one could not tow another, as was the practice with T-34s. Therefore they had to be repaired wherever they broke down, often under enemy fire. Such repairs were usually handled by company deputy commanders for technical affairs in the tank battalions and by the repair and reconstruction companies of the tank brigades.

The work of brigade repair and reconstruction companies occupied a special place in the work of the Western Front's ABTU. These companies were the forward detachment of the tank repair service, constantly supplying the tank troops with repair vehicles right on the battlefield. While army and frontal repair units returned tanks to operation on the second day as a rule, and later in a number of cases, the repair and reconstruction companies did so in a few hours, or a maximum of 1 day after they broke down.

On 15 November General P. Ye. Shurov, the Western Front's deputy commander for armored troops, summoned me for a briefing. I briefed him on the course of tank repairs at the front's repair bases and within the troops themselves, and I made mention of the difficulties we were experiencing with tank machine units and spare parts.

The general stood up from his desk and began pacing the office:

"It's taking you a long time to make the repairs, a very long time. And the enemy is not waiting! I don't have any engines, it's your business to find them."

Gradually the discussion became more at ease. Shurov stopped his pacing, and he spoke gently:

"Come with me to Kashira. Getman and Kirichenko have almost no operating tanks."

Colonel A. L. Getman's 112th Tank Division and Lieutenant Colonel I. F. Kirichenko's 9th Tank Brigade were fighting stubborn battles with enemy tanks in the vicinity of Kashira. The fascists were trying to capture Kashira at any price.

The first thing that caught my eye as we approached the city was the damaged vehicle collection point. The 25th PRB was working here. General Shurov declined to be briefed by the base chief, Pozdnyakovskiy, instead ordering me to find out what was going on. He himself went to division headquarters, promising to drop by the PRB on his way back.

At the SPAM, the tanks were lined up in rows, and they continued to come in. The work went on in organized and purposeful fashion. I carefully examined the vehicle repair schedule together with the base chief once again. The crews of the damaged tanks were ordered to help the repairmen. The workers were told what the schedule was to be. The general arrived. We reported the volume of work on each vehicle requiring repair, and the amount of time each vehicle would be down.

As always the foreman, Sergeant G. T. Zakharchenko, organized the tank reconstruction effort well. The repairmen worked on three T-34 tanks simultaneously. The responsibilities were distributed among the brigade's members in such a way that there would not be a single minute's delay in the work. If some spare parts were lacking, the warriors temporarily helped their comrades on other tanks. On some days the PRB put up to 10 tanks back into operation.

In the hardest days of Tula's defense the front's troop commander, Army General G. K. Zhukov ordered the chief of the ABTU to form a tank battalion out of the repaired tanks and send it to Tula. I was ordered to accompany the echelon in which the tanks were traveling. On 17 November the battalion was boarded at Kalanchevskaya's station. The trip from Moscow to Tula was short, but how long and dangerous it seemed to me in those anxious November days of 1941!

We traveled at night. Several times we were raided by enemy aviation. We quickly repaired damaged track with our own resources, and moved on. Blanketed in snow, Tula appeared stern and alert. The workers kept their weapons within reach at their machine tools, ready to enter into combat at any moment. In Tula, the battalion was placed within the composition of Colonel I. I. Yushchuk's 32d Tank Brigade.

The 15th PRB was repairing tanks on the territory of a plant in the southeastern quarter of Tula belonging to the People's Commissariat of Railways. It was headed by Military Engineer 3d Rank Dmitriy Vasil'yevich Vasin--a prominent repair specialist. When I met him there were 40-50 damaged vehicles in the shops. My eyes were dazzled by the abundance of different types of vehicles. There were BTs, T-34s, KVs and "Valentines" here. Naturally this created additional difficulties for the repairmen. V. G. Zhavoronkov, secretary of the Tul'skaya Oblast party committee, provided much assistance in materials and personnel.

In late November the 22d PRB was relocated from Istra to Moscow, to the cable shop of the "Serp i Molot" Plant due to the increase in the number of KV tanks that had to be repaired. The shop had a railroad spur and two cranes with capacities of 25 and 10 tons. When I arrived there together with the base chief, Military Engineer 3d Rank L. N. Pereverzev, the plant was already almost completely vacated. The howling winter winds were the unchallenged master of the frigid rooms. The trains had left the plant tracks for Magnitogorsk. However, because there were not enough rail cars, not everything was evacuated.

One early evening Military Technician 2d Rank A. D. Denisyuk, a platoon commander in the repair and reconstruction company of the 1st Guards Tank Brigade, towed two KV tanks to the plant. "How much time would it take to make the most necessary repairs?" asked Denisyuk. His eyes shown brightly from a face darkened by lack of sleep.

"The best we could do would be 20 hours," replied Military Technician 2d Rank V. N. Anisimov, deputy chief of the PRB.

"The tanks have to fight in the morning," Denisyuk said softly, as if to himself, and lowering his head, he made his way to a corner and fell asleep on the spot.

The workers overheard this conversation. There were but 10 hours until morning.

"Well, we could at least try," fitter I. I. Vorob'yev said, speaking for all. By morning, the two menacing vehicles left the plant to smash the enemy.

The front's 102d and 132d separate repair and reconstruction battalions occupied a special place in the work of the ABTU in this period. These were high-capacity frontal repair units staffed by highly qualified specialists. In addition to working at frontal SPAMs, their traveling repair brigades provided considerable assistance to the tank brigades in restoration of damaged vehicles. These battalions were always sent by the ABTU chief wherever the repair situation became critical. Such was the case, for example, at the beginning of the defensive engagement at Moscow. The industrial plants had practically ceased production of spare parts and machine units, and the central armor dump, which was deployed in Moscow, was burned down during a fascist air raid. Together with representatives from the RFSFR Council of People's Commissars, L. M. Kirpichnikov and V. I. Smirnov, I toured all of the plants in Moscow that were involved some way or another with diesel engines. We got off to a good start: We managed to gather together about 20 specialists and some equipment that was left behind after evacuation of the plant. This was the start of special subunits of the 102d and 132d separate repair and reconstruction battalions for the repair of tank engines, gear boxes and other tank machine units. The assortment of tank parts they restored and manufactured was extensive.

This was an entirely new direction in the work. That which was previously the job of tank plants and tank repair enterprises became a function of troop repair units.

The 102d Separate Repair and Construction Battalion relocated itself in the subway train shop at Moscow's Komsomol Square and quickly deployed its productive

capacities. The battalion commander, Major I. R. Kreynin, proved himself to be efficient and energetic. He established good contact with the chief of the subway workshop, I. A. Ivanov, who helped him organize mass casting of a number of tank parts. Overhauled T-34s were given trial runs on the Sadovoy Ring Road, mainly at night, and sometimes even in daylight, and then they were immediately sent to the forward edge.

The 132d Separate Repair and Reconstruction Battalion specialized in the repair of light tanks of all modifications--T-30, T-40 and T-60. The battalion commander--Captain I. A. Fedorov--was an efficient, resourceful officer. He was a hard worker, and he faced all difficulties with a sense of humor and energy. The combat losses of light tanks were sizeable. But they took as much labor to repair as did the KVs or T-34s. The parts and machine units of these vehicles were relatively lighter, making it easier to repair them quickly.

The tank repair units did a great deal of work during the battle of Moscow. Just in December alone, the front's repair units repaired 492 tanks.*

For exemplary fulfillment of command assignments to repair combat equipment, Army General G. K. Zhukov, troop commander of the Western Front, published an order on 5 December 1941 awarding orders and medals to 31 persons of the repair units; this included the Order of the Red Banner for Senior Sergeant N. M. Levchenko and for Military Technician 2d Rank S. K. Nikiforov, and the Order of the Red Star for 14 persons.**

*TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], f. 208, op. 2524, d. 22, l. 58.

**KRASNOARMEYSKAYA PRAVDA, 9 December 1941.

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WARTIME OPERATIONS: GUARDS UNITS IN BATTLE OF MOSCOW

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 1, Jan 82 (signed to press 25 Dec 81) pp 59-61

[Article, published under the heading "Documents and Materials," prepared by Maj A. Bulan'ko: "The Guards in the Battle of Moscow"]

[Text] Forty years ago, in the historic battle with fascist German invaders at Moscow, the fate of the motherland and the fate of the Soviet people was decided. Recognizing the enormous political and military strategic significance of Moscow, the German command concentrated its main forces in the Moscow sector.

Stubborn fighting developed at the approaches to the capital. Under extremely difficult conditions the Soviet soldiers did everything possible and, it would seem, the impossible to defend the capital. They opposed the enemy with high discipline and mass heroism. "Vast is Russia, but there is nowhere to retreat--Moscow is behind"--these words became the slogan of the capital's defenders. About 40 units and formations were awarded the Guards title for the valor and bravery they displayed in the battle of Moscow.

The 316th and 78th rifle divisions were among the first to receive the Guards title at the battle of Moscow. Under the command of General I. V. Panfilov, between 20 and 27 October 1941 the 316th Rifle Division repelled attacks by three infantry and one tank division of the fascists, annihilating up to 80 tanks and several battalions of infantry. By an order of the USSR People's Commissar of Defense dated 18 November 1941, the division was renamed the 8th Guards Rifle Division. Concurrently, a ukase of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet awarded the Order of the Red Banner to it. The 78th Rifle Division (commander, Major General A. P. Beloborodov) was reorganized as the 9th Guards Division. It lived up to its Guards title in combat. On 3 May 1942 the division was awarded the Order of the Red Banner (see documents No 1 and 4).

Despite the enemy's numerical superiority in tanks, Soviet tank crews inflicted heavy losses on him. Miracles of bravery and heroism were displayed by soldiers of the 4th Tank Brigade commanded by Colonel M. Ye. Katukov. In the beginning of October the brigade was brought forward to the Orel-Tula sector in the vicinity of Mtsensk to meet penetrating enemy tanks. Making extensive use of ambushes, it blocked the thrusts of two enemy tank divisions for several days and annihilated 133 tanks.

By an order of the USSR People's Commissar of Defense dated 11 November 1941, the 4th Tank Brigade was renamed the 1st Guards Brigade for valorous and competent actions against superior enemy forces (see document No 2).

Pilots also fought at the air approaches to the capital. Many air units were reorganized into Guards units. Thus in the period from 12 July to 1 October 1941 the 29th Red Banner Fighter Air Regiment flew 3,200 combat sorties. The regiment's pilots knocked down 47 enemy airplanes. On 9 November 1941 this regiment was awarded the Order of Lenin by a ukase of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, and an order published by the USSR People's Commissar of Defense on 6 December 1941 renamed it a Guards unit (see document No 3).

Cavalry soldiers of the II and III cavalry corps (commanders, Major General P. A. Belov and Major General L. M. Dovator) made a great contribution to the victory over the enemy. These corps were reorganized as Guards units by an order of the USSR People's Commissar of Defense dated 26 November 1941 (see document No 4).

Gunners fought courageously. The 440th, 471st, 555th and 274th artillery regiments and the 289th, 296th, 509th and 760th antitank artillery regiments displayed exemplary heroism, valor and discipline. They were all reorganized as Guards units by an order of the USSR People's Commissar of Defense dated 8 January 1942 (see document No 5). The archival documents published here attest to the mass heroism of Soviet soldiers in the battle of Moscow.

Document No 1. From an Order of the USSR People's Commissar of Defense Dated 18 November 1941 Renaming the 316th Rifle Division a Guards Division

"In numerous battles of our Soviet motherland against German invaders, the 316th Rifle Division demonstrated exemplary courage, valor, discipline and organization. By its valorous and competent actions of 20-27 October 1941, the 316th Division ward off attacks by three fascist infantry divisions and one tank division. The division's personnel fought bravely, halted the advance of superior enemy forces, turned it into a rout and inflicted large losses on the enemy, annihilating up to 80 of the enemy's tanks and several battalions of infantry.

"On this basis and in compliance with a decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, the Supreme High Command General Headquarters orders:

"1. For valor displayed in combat, and for the steadfastness, courage and heroism of the personnel, the 316th Rifle Division is renamed the 8th Guards Rifle Division (division commander, Major General I. V. Panfilov).

"2. In compliance with a decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, this division is awarded the Guards pennant...."

TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], f. 2, op. 920266, d. 1, l. 665.

Document No 2. From an Order of the USSR People's Commissar Dated 11 November 1941 Renaming the 4th Tank Brigade the 1st Guards Tank Brigade

"Despite the enemy's significant numerical superiority, by its valorous and competent combat activities from 4 October to 11 October the 4th Tank Brigade inflicted serious losses on the enemy and fulfilled its mission of providing cover to a concentration of our troops.

"Two fascist tank divisions and one motorized division were halted and caused to suffer enormous losses....

"As a result of bitter fighting between the brigade and the enemy's 3d and 4th tank divisions and a motorized division, the fascists lost: 133 tanks, 49 guns, 8 airplanes, 15 prime movers loaded with ammunition, up to a regiment of infantry, 6 mortars and other arms.

"The losses of the 4th Tank Brigade were negligible.

"The brigade's outstanding actions and its success are explained by the fact that the brigade:

- "1. Maintained continual combat reconnaissance.
- "2. Kept the tanks fully coordinated with motorized infantry and artillery.
- "3. Employed tanks correctly....
- "4. The personnel acted with bravery and coordination....

"The combat activities of the 4th Tank Brigade must become an example for all units of the Red Army in the war of liberation against the fascist invaders.

"These are my orders:

- "1. For valorous and competent combat activities, the 4th Tank Brigade is henceforth named the '1st Guards Tank Brigade'.
- "2. The commander of the 1st Guards Tank Brigade, Major General of Tank Troops Katukov, is to submit the names of warriors and commanders who distinguished themselves the greatest for a government decoration."

TsAMO, f. 2, op. 920266, d. 1, l. 663.

Document No 3. From an Order of the USSR People's Commissar of Defense Dated 6 December 1941 Renaming the 29th Red Banner Fighter Air Regiment a Guards Regiment

"The personnel of the 29th Red Banner Fighter Air Regiment displayed exemplary boldness, courage and heroism in battles with German fascism.

"In the period from 12 July to 1 October 1941 the regiment flew 3,200 combat sorties. The regiment's personnel knocked down 47 enemy airplanes in aerial combat. In air raids they dispersed and annihilated 12 mechanized columns, 4 columns of artillery and 2 columns of cavalry. They annihilated two fuel dumps and four fuel tanks.

"For outstanding combat activities, the 29th Red Banner Fighter Air Regiment is awarded the Order of Lenin by a ukase of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet dated 9 November 1941.

"On this basis and in compliance with a decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, the Supreme High Command General Headquarters orders:

"1. For valor displayed in combat and for the steadfastness, bravery and heroism of the personnel, the 29th Red Banner Order of Lenin Fighter Air Regiment is re-named the 1st Red Banner Order of Lenin Guards Fighter Air Regiment (regiment commander, Major Yudakov; commissar, Senior Political Instructor Zotov).

"2. In compliance with a decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, this regiment is awarded the Guards Pennant."

TsAMO, f. 2, op. 920266, d. 1, l. 678.

Document No 4. From an Order of the USSR People's Commissar of Defense Dated 26 November 1941 Reorganizing the II and III Cavalry Corps and the 78th Rifle Division into Guards Formations.

"...in numerous battles for our Soviet motherland against the German invaders, the II Cavalry Corps consisting of the 5th and 9th cavalry divisions and the III Cavalry Corps consisting of the 50th and 53d cavalry divisions demonstrated exemplary courage, valor, discipline and organization. These divisions warded off several attacks by superior enemy forces during a long period of combat in the Southwestern and Western fronts, and on going over to the offensive, they inflicted a brutal defeat upon the enemy, seizing prisoners of war and trophies.

"1. On this basis and in compliance with a decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, the Supreme High Command General Headquarters orders the following reorganizations for valor displayed in combat and for the steadfastness, bravery and heroism of the personnel:

"a) the II Cavalry Corps into the I Guards Cavalry Corps (corps commander, Major General Pavel Alekseyevich Belov);

"b) the III Cavalry Corps into the II Guards Cavalry Corps (corps commander, Major General Lev Mikhaylovich Dovator);

"c) the 78th Rifle Division into the 9th Guards Rifle Division (division commander, Major General Afanasiy Pavlant'yevich Beloborodov).

"2. In compliance with a decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, these divisions and corps are awarded Guards pennants."

TsAMO, f. 2, op. 920266, d. 1, l. 670.

Document No 5. From an Order of the USSR People's Commissar of Defense Dated 8 January 1941 on Reorganizing the 440th, 471st, 555th and 274th Artillery Regiments and the 289th, 296th, 509th and 760th Antitank Artillery Regiments Into Guards Regiments

"In numerous battles for our Soviet motherland against fascist invaders, the 440th, 471st, 555th and 274th artillery regiments and the 289th, 296th, 509th and 760th antitank artillery regiments demonstrated exemplary courage, valor, discipline and organization. Fighting continuous battles with the fascist invaders, these regiments inflicted enormous losses on fascist troops, and by their annihilatory strikes they destroyed enemy manpower and equipment and mercilessly smashed the fascist invaders.

"For valor displayed in battles for the fatherland against German invaders, for steadfastness, bravery, discipline and organization and for the heroism of the personnel, the following reorganizations are ordered:

"The 440th Artillery Regiment into the 1st Guards Artillery Regiment (regiment commander, Major A. I. Bryukhanov);

"The 471st Artillery Regiment into the 2d Guards Artillery Regiment (regiment commander, Major. I. P. Azarenkov);

"The 555th Artillery Regiment into the 3d Guards Artillery Regiment (regiment commander, Major P. A. Solov'yev);

"The 274th Artillery Regiment into the 4th Guards Artillery Regiment (regiment commander, Colonel A. I. Ratov);

"The 289th Antitank Artillery Regiment into the 1st Guards Antitank Artillery Regiment (regiment commander, Major M. K. Yefremenko);

"The 296th Antitank Artillery Regiment into the 2d Guards Antitank Artillery Regiment (regiment commander, Captain N. S. Aleshkin);

"The 509th Antitank Artillery Regiment into the 3d Guards Antitank Artillery Regiment (regiment commander, Lieutenant Colonel V. A. Gerasimov);

"The 760th Antitank Artillery Regiment into the 4th Guards Antitank Artillery Regiment (regiment commander, Major S. N. Zolotikh).

"These regiments are awarded Guards pennants."

TsAMO, f. 2, op. 920266, d. 3, l. 6.

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WARTIME OPERATIONS: CIVILIANS IN DEFENSE OF MOSCOW

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 1, Jan 82 (signed to press 25 Dec 81) pp 65-69

[Article, published under the heading "Scientific Reports and Information," by Professor and Doctor of Historical Sciences A. Sinitsyn: "The Contribution of the Capital's Workers in the Rout of the Enemy"]

[Text] The laborers of Moscow--glorious patriots of the socialist fatherland--also made a great contribution to the strength of the capital's defenses and to the outstanding victory achieved by the Soviet troops at Moscow. In the face of mortal danger, Moscow's laborers rose as one to defend the liberty and independence of the motherland, to defend the great achievements of October. In response to an appeal of the Communist Party and the Soviet government to decisively repulse the fascist invaders, they vowed to do everything possible to defeat the enemy, and to subordinate all of their activities to the interests of the front.

The Moscow city party organization took charge of the patriotic initiative of the capital's laborers to render assistance to the front. Guiding itself by decisions on the capital's defense published by the VKP (b) [All-Union Communist Party (of Bolsheviks)] and the GKO [State Defense Committee], the Moscow city party committee developed concrete measures to mobilize the city's forces and resources for the enemy's defeat. Thus all party, soviet and economic organizations and institutions in the city received concrete assignments associated with organizing military production, seeking possibilities for increasing production for the front and making sensible use of manpower. The best party members, ones who had the greatest experience in business management in a war situation, were sent to the critical areas of the work. Party organizers of the VKP (b) Central Committee and the Moscow city party committee were appointed to many large enterprises and institutions.

Almost all of Moscow's plants and factories received emergency assignments for the production of military products in the first months of the war. Not only the machine building, machine tool building and instrument making plants but also the light, textile and food industry enterprises as well as local industry were reorganized for war production. By fall 1941, a total of about 2,000 of the capital's enterprises were reorganized for war production.¹ Large enterprises were concurrently evacuated and rebased in the east. More than 200 enterprises were evacuated to the country's rear just from Moscow alone.

Working in darkened shops, often during bombing raids, the capital's laborers increased their war production from day to day, no matter how much time they had to invest. The city's plants and factories produced airplanes, tanks, cross-country vehicles, guns, rockets, machineguns, automatic rifles, bombs, shells, grenades, uniforms and medicines in ever-growing proportions. In the hard, heroic days of Moscow's defense the following slogans caught on especially widely in the factory and plant shops: "What the front needs, we will make!", "We will not leave the shop until we fill the front's order!", "If you want to beat the enemy in the war, double and triple your quota!". At many enterprises the laborers adopted additional pledges--to do the work of one's self and a comrade who has left for the front, to master associated occupations and to operate banked machine tools. The number of the "two-hundreds" and "three-hundreds"--workers completing two and three production quotas--grew.

The capital's women provided great assistance to filling the front's orders. They were among the first to make the challenge: "Women--to production!", thus initiating a mass patriotic movement to get office workers and housewives into production (to replace husbands and sons that had gone to the front), and to master men's occupations. In just the first 5 months of the war more than 100,000 women came to Moscow's industrial enterprises; moreover, thousands of pensioners and old workers returned to their jobs. All of this had extremely important significance to ensuring the uninterrupted work of the capital's plants and factories to fill the front's orders. Thus as early as in September 1941 Moscow provided up to 20 high-speed fighters and a large quantity of other combat equipment, arms and ammunition to the front each day.² Moscow's workers also provided significant assistance to the fighting army in making emergency repairs on combat equipment. The "Serp i Molot" and "Krasnyy Proletariy" plants, the subway train workshops and other enterprises repaired 329 tanks, thousands of armored transporters and motor vehicles and a large quantity of infantry weapons during the battle of Moscow.

Various voluntary people's formations of the city took an active part in the capital's defense and in the defeat of the fascist troops--People's Home Guard divisions, fighter, communist and worker's battalions and partisan detachments. There were a total of about 170,000 persons just in these voluntary formations alone. Almost a third of them (approximately 50,000) were communists and Komsomol members.

Within the very first days of the war, more than 18,000 of Moscow's citizens joined fighter battalions created in all 25 of the city's rayons. The fighter battalions took under their protection all military and important national economic facilities, mainly the plants, factories, combines, railroad stations, wharves, bridges crossing the Moskva River, subway stations, communication enterprises and electric power and water supply facilities. Day and night their squads patrolled the capital's streets, caught spies and provocateurs, and created ambushes for criminal elements. They often helped evacuate people and material valuables into the country's rear, and they participated in emergency operations following fascist air raids.

The fighter battalions had transportation and armament at their disposal, and when necessary, they could efficiently transfer subunits to threatened regions of the city and provide assistance to military units and local authorities.

In the beginning of fall the capital's fighter battalions were grouped together into regiments, and in October-November the latter were used as the basis for forming the 4th (commander, Lieutenant Colonel P. S. Gavilevskiy; commissar, Regimental Commissar V. G. Volgin) and the 5th (commander, Colonel S. Ye. Isayev; commissar, Senior Battalion Commissar I. I. Zhzhenov) Moscow rifle divisions. In January 1942 these divisions were reorganized as the 155th and 158th rifle divisions respectively.

In the first days of July 12 People's Home Guard divisions began to be formed in the capital. During the Smolensk engagement the People's Home Guard divisions were included within the composition of the Western and Reserve fronts, and they went into combat in late September.

A meeting of the city's active party members was convened in the capital on 13 October. A. S. Shcherbakov, secretary of the party Central Committee, the Moscow committee and the Moscow city committee, gave a report. He appealed to all of the city's communists and laborers in behalf of the VKP(b) Central Committee to transform Moscow into an impregnable fortress. Considering the serious military situation, the active members turned special attention to creating new combat formations, increasing the production of arms and ammunition and building new lines of defense. In view of the greater danger the active party members felt it necessary to mobilize the entire Moscow party organization and all of the capital's communists, Komsomol members and laborers to repel the fascist Germans, to defend Moscow and to organize a victory.³

Immediately after, formation of workers' and communist battalions began in every rayon. A total of about 12,000 persons joined the new volunteer formations by 16 October. The People's Commissariat of Defense allocated several thousand rifles, hundreds of machineguns and guns to arm the workers' and communist battalions. The volunteer formations received some of their arms, gear and clothing from local enterprises and organizations. As an example Leningrad Rayon's battalion received six motor vehicles, 10 motorcycles, 600 pairs of felt boot liners, 700 cotton trousers and 650 caps from local enterprises.⁴

All newly formed battalions occupied defenses along the city limits of Moscow on 17-18 October, covering the most important approaches to the city on the Volokolamsk, Dmitrov, Kaluga and Leningrad motor roads as well as the Kiev and Minsk highways.

At these lines of defense, the battalion personnel immediately began building new fortifications and started their combat training. Here as well, the soldiers and commanders took their military oaths. The volunteers vowed to stand to the death, to keep the enemy out of Moscow and to destroy fascist invaders on the fields before Moscow.

Inasmuch as the Moscow volunteer formations were manned in part by civilians and the situation demanded strict discipline, a decision to reorganize these subunits was made at the end of October. Two communist regiments were formed out of 25 communist battalions. These occupied defenses in the capital's first combat sector, which covered the Dmitrov, Leningrad and Volokolamsk motor roads. On 28 October 1941 the troop grouping that was defending the capital's first combat sector was transformed into a Moscow workers' division. By this time its armament

included about 7,000 rifles, 479 machineguns, 44 guns, tens of thousands of grenades and Molotov cocktails.⁵ An order of the People's Commissar of Defense dated 14 November 1941 renamed the Moscow Workers' Division the 3d Moscow Communist Rifle Division (commander, Colonel N. P. Anisimov; commissar--Battalion Commissar K. A. Biryukov), and on 22 January 1942 it was renamed the 130th Rifle Division.

In the event that street fighting would occur in the capital, 169 workers' fighting detachments containing about 7,000 volunteers were formed in October. At that same time tank destroyer detachments began to be formed out of volunteers in all of the capital's rayons. Each detachment contained about 200 persons. All warriors in the detachment underwent special training in the fighting of tanks in a city.

Moscow's residents did much to defend the capital against enemy air raids as well. Within a short time more than 12,000 firefighting squads containing over 200,000 persons were formed in the city, and a Komsomol youth air defense regiment consisting of 5,000 persons was created. The air defense subunits were reorganized as special units making it possible to solve air defense problems more efficiently. In just the first summer of war, the warriors of the Komsomol youth air defense regiment extinguished thousands of incendiary bombs. Hundreds of volunteers patrolled the roof-tops day and night in each of the capital's rayons, quickly putting out any fires that arose due to enemy bombings.

The city's laborers also participated actively in the construction of defensive structures at the far and near approaches to the capital. Up to 100,000 of Moscow's population helped to build the Mozhaysk line of defense back in summer 1941. And when an exceptionally dangerous situation evolved in the Moscow sector, construction of a new line of defense, consisting of a forward defense area security zone and two lines of defense--a main line and a city line, began in response to a GKO decision.

The entire effort to construct the lines of defense proceeded under the guidance of the Moscow party organization and the Moscow Soviet. The Moscow Soviet (chairman, V. Pronin) mobilized the able-bodied population to build fortifications, and it sought out the needed transportation and tools. Construction was headed by M. A. Yasnov, the deputy chairman of the Moscow Soviet Executive Committee. N. I. Podvoyskiy, one of Lenin's comrades-in-arms and the leader of the assault on the Winter Palace in 1917, managed one of the construction sectors.

On 25 November 1941 the Moscow Soviet reported to the GKO that the capital's laborers had finished construction of the line of defense, which extended from the Moskva River near Rublevo through Kuntsevo, Nikol'skoye, Vorontsovo, Zyuzino and Tsaritsyno to Brattsevo. It was concurrently reported that construction of the lines of defense in the city's north--in the vicinity of Krasnogorsk, the Khimki reservoir, Lianozovo and Mytishchi--was nearing completion. In all by this time, 1,428 earth-and-timber and permanent artillery and machinegun emplacements, 165 km of antitank ditches and 111 km of barbed wire entanglements had been built.⁶ Defensive structures were also built on the city streets themselves.

Taking an active part in the defense of Moscow, the capital's patriots simultaneously provided various sorts of material and financial assistance to the fighting army. Thus workers of the Moscow Passenger Terminal of the Lenin Railroad and the Moscow

Sorting Station built three armored trains in fall 1941 during their time off using their own resources. It took the same amount of time for workers of the Moscow Railroad Terminal to provide the front with four armored trains.

Moscow citizens surrendered private motor vehicles, motorcycles, bicycles, typewriters, sewing machines, valuable articles, jewelry and personal savings to the defense fund. By 1 October the fund had received 61 million rubles cash, 10 million rubles worth of state loan notes, about 7 kg of gold and platinum and 327 kg of silver. A month later the total contributions of just money alone increased by 25 million rubles. And by the end of January 1942 the total contributions to the defense fund in Moscow reached 142 million rubles.⁷

The patriotic movement to collect and send gifts to the front assumed broad scope. Back in September 1941 collection of gifts for frontline soldiers on the occasion of the 24th anniversary of October was started on the initiative of the worker collectives of the "Krasnyy Proletariy" and "Serp i Molot" plants and the "Trekhgornaya Manufaktura" Combine. Hundreds of thousands of the city's inhabitants actively participated in the collection of these gifts.

Letters or short notes were attached to the gifts by the Muskovites as a rule: "Dear soldiers, stand to the death! Do not disgrace Russian combat glory!"; "Our dear fathers and brothers! Drive the enemy from our sacred soil more quickly! Remember that we are with you!" "My sons! Beat the accursed enemy! Let him rest neither day nor night! Let the earth burn beneath him everywhere!" Written with extreme warmth, they were especially precious to the soldiers.

The scope of this patriotic movement may be deduced from the following figures. By New Year's Day 1942 Muskovites collected and sent 92,320 gifts to soldiers of the Western Front and hospitals, and in another month and a half the frontline soldiers received another 129,040 gift packages.⁸

Simultaneously with collecting gifts for frontline soldiers, major collections of warm clothing were conducted in Moscow, as well as throughout the country. Both enterprise and institution collectives and housewives took an active part in this noble movement. Just laborers and white collar workers of the "Krasnyy Proletariy" Plant collected about 2,000 articles of warm clothing in September 1941. More than 3,000 pairs of felt boot inserts, woolen sweaters, blankets and various sorts of thermal underwear were concurrently collected by laborers and white collar workers of the Plant imeni Sergo Ordzhonikidze.⁹ Laborers of the Sokol'nicheskii Rail Car Repair Plant provided 1,500 articles of warm clothing to frontline soldiers. Working women of the Hosiery Factory imeni V. P. Nogin displayed remarkable initiative. During their time off they knitted more than 2,000 pairs of woolen mittens, gloves and stockings for frontline soldiers out of waste materials.¹¹ Tens of thousands of various articles of warm clothing were gathered for the fighting army by the collectives of other enterprises and institutions in the capital as well. Just Baumanskiy Rayon alone collected 37,460 articles of warm clothing to include 335 jackets, 388 cotton vests and coats, 2,046 woolen sweaters and overalls, 1,238 muff caps, 1,567 pairs of thermal underwear and many other articles of clothing and sent them to the front in the beginning of October.¹²

Muskovites also displayed high patriotism in the mass donor movement. By as early as in the first months of the war, several donor stations had to be opened at hospitals in addition to the 25 rayon donor stations. But even these stations, despite the longer work day, had difficulty in dealing with all who wished to give their blood. Even during the savage battles in October and November on the fields surrounding Moscow, more than 1,500 persons gave their blood in the capital each day.¹³

Entire work teams and families often came in together as donors. As an example blood was given twice a month by the mother and daughter Tolokonnikova from the "Rot-Front" Factory, and by mother and daughter Gubareva from the "Krasnaya Zvezda" Factory. A worker of the Factory imeni E. Tel'man, P. N. Matveicheva and her two daughters and sister became active donors. "I have no sons, and therefore I will help the front with my blood," declared Praskov'ya Nikitichna during her first visit to the donor station.¹⁴

Rather frequently, donors sent notes to the hospitals in which they wished their "blood brothers" the fastest recovery. "To an unknown but dear soldier," read one of them. "Let my blood return your strength and health. Get well soon. Write as soon as you recover."¹⁵ And the frontline soldiers did write. Thousands of letters of thanks were delivered to those who, by their blood, saved the lives of seriously wounded soldiers and hastened their recovery and their return to the fighting.

Moscow donors gave 90,000 liters of blood to the front during the battle of Moscow.¹⁶ This was quite enough to completely satisfy the demand for donated blood in all frontal hospitals located in the capital and in the oblast.

Thus through their active participation in mobilizing all of the capital's forces and resources for the enemy's defeat, Muskovites made a sizeable contribution to strengthening the city's defensive power and to the victory achieved by Soviet troops at Moscow. Their patriotic deeds will always be remembered with delight and with gratefulness by the Soviet people, and by all to whom peace and progress on earth are precious.

FOOTNOTES

1. "Ocherki istorii Moskovskoy organizatsii KPSS" [Notes on the History of the Moscow CPSU Organization], Moskovskiy rabochiy, 1966, p 570.
2. VOPROSY ISTORII, No 3, 1975, p 137.
3. "Vystoyali i pobedili. Dokumenty i materialy" [They Endured and They Won. Documents and Materials], Moskovskiy rabochiy, 1966, p 148.
4. MPA [Moscow Party Archives], f. 3, op. 52, d. 86, l. 2.
5. "Moskva--frontu. 1941-1945. Sbornik dokumentov i materialov" [Moscow--for the Front. 1941-1945. Collection of Documents and Materials], Moscow, Nauka, 1966, p 141.
6. Archives of the Moscow Soviet. Decisions. 1941, Vol 1, d. 510, l. 80.

7. PRAVDA, 2 October, 5 November 1941; 4 February 1942.
8. MPA, f. 4, op. 46, d. 4, ll. 19,22.
9. MOSKOVSKIY BOL'SHEVIK, 11 October 1941.
10. "Moskva--frontu," p 342.
11. MOSKOVSKIY BOL'SHEVIK, 11 December 1941.
12. Ibid., 5 October.
13. KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, 8 October 1941.
14. MPA, f. 3, op. 52, d. 86, l. 192.
15. TRUD , 30 June 1941.
16. MPA, f. 3, op. 18, d. 26, l. 8.

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MEETING ENGAGEMENT TACTICS: POSTWAR DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSED

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[Article, published under the heading "Scientific Reports and Information," by Candidate of Military Sciences Maj Gen L. Korzun: "Development of Meeting Engagement Tactics in the Postwar Period." Passages printed in boldface in source are enclosed in slantlines.]

[Text] The meeting engagement, which is a variant of offensive combat in which both sides strive to complete their missions through offensive actions, is very complex in terms of both organization and means of conduct.

During the Great Patriotic War such engagements made up a significant proportion of the total combat activities of the subunits and units, especially tank and mechanized. They were an exceptionally frequent phenomenon in the course of successful offensive operations in the second and third periods of the Great Patriotic War.

The highly rich experience of meeting engagements in the past war became a subject of the most careful study and analysis after the war ended. It was primarily on the basis of this experience that the tactics of the meeting engagement were developed in the postwar period. This process is divided into two periods. The first (1945-1953) lasted until nuclear weapons became a part of our armament. The second began in 1954 and has lasted until the present.

In the first postwar years the effort to understand the experience of the past war and to polish the methods of organizing and conducting the meeting engagement were essentially founded on a technical and material base which had not undergone any serious qualitative changes.

The tactics of the meeting engagement enjoyed the most significant development in the second period, when fundamental transformations began in the armament and equipment of the ground troops, caused mainly by introduction of nuclear missiles, which demanded improvement of their organizational structure. This is why the main attention will be devoted in this article to the improvements made in the second period in the means used by motorized rifle and tank subunits to organize and conduct the meeting engagement.

Special studies, journals and newspapers--especially VOYENNY VESTNIK and KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, the appropriate chapters and parts of many works, and a number of special

books have been devoted to different aspects of the meeting engagement.¹ The tactics of the meeting engagement, as developed by the appropriate time, were documented in field manuals--for example in the 1959 Infantry Field Manual and in the 1964 Ground Troops (Battalion-Company) Field Manual, and they were described in the article "Meeting Engagement" in the Soviet Military Encyclopedia.²

What can we say specifically about the development of the tactics of the meeting engagement of tank and motorized rifle subunits in the postwar period? First of all/it reflected the possibility of arisal of meeting engagements, which was significantly greater in modern conditions, and their much-enlarged proportion in the overall system of combat activities./ The reason for this lay primarily in the dramatically greater striking power of the troops, especially in operations using nuclear weapons, and the significant increase in their possibilities for maneuver permits both sides to attain their goals by active offensive operations, including at night, more often than before.

In the first period of the Great Patriotic War meeting engagements occurred most frequently at the time of counterattacks and counterthrusts during the defensive actions of our troops (for example the 29th Tank Division, XI Mechanized Corps, 22-23 June 1941 at Grodno; XII Mechanized Corps, 23-25 June 1941 at Shyaulay; VIII Mechanized Corps, 26-28 June 1941 at Dubno; in the Smolensk engagement, in the battle of Moscow etc.); in the second and third periods they occurred during repulsion of enemy counterattacks and counterthrusts and in the course of combat with enemy reserves during exploitation of an offensive (for example in the counteroffensive at Stalingrad, during the summer offensive of 1943, and in the Zhitomir-Berdichev, Belorussian, L'vov-Sandomierz, Iasi-Kishinev, Vistula-Oder and other operations). But today, as the Soviet Military Encyclopedia points out, the meeting engagement may occur during a march, in an offensive when repelling counterattacks and counterthrusts, during exploitation of a breakthrough, in collisions with enemy troops advanced to close breaches or occupy important lines and, in defense, during counterattacks and counterthrusts aimed at annihilating airborne and marine assault forces.³

As in the Great Patriotic War, the meeting engagement can now occur most frequently during a march, in the course of various regroupings. At the same time, use of nuclear weapons and conventional resources with much greater destructive power than in the past makes it possible for both sides to create breaches in the opponent's combat formations which would have to be plugged by reserves or by troops from other sectors. This expands the possibilities for occurrence of a meeting engagement during the time subunits are being brought forward to close a breach. It was in exactly such a situation that the tank battalion commanded by Captain I. Buadze in the "Zapad-81" exercise in September 1981 was committed to a meeting engagement.⁴

The scale of use of airborne and marine assault landing forces, which has broadened significantly today, produces a greater probability of arisal of meeting engagements as a means for annihilating such forces.

Literature on the meeting engagement published after introduction of nuclear weapons into the troops turned attention to the fact that the conditions of arisal and conduct of the meeting engagement are constantly growing more complex as weapons and combat equipment undergo development, and various points of view were stated

the sort of meeting engagements which were the most complex. Thus the work "Tactics" asserted that meeting engagements arising in defensive actions as a rule proceed in more complex conditions than those arising in offensive actions.⁵ The book "Nuclear Weapons and Development of Tactics," published in the following year, stated that meeting engagements would be the most typical and at the same time most complex when they arise and proceed during deployment following a march.⁶

From my point of view such categorical assertions are improper, even though certain grounds supporting each one of them could be found. After all, the conditions under which a meeting engagement arises and proceeds may be quite variable in terms of both nature and complexity for motorized rifle and tank units and subunits both within the framework of an offensive and within the framework of defensive actions.

Much depends on the particular way in which a given subunit is being used. The 1964 Ground Troops Field Manual stated that in anticipation of a meeting engagement, a battalion might operate as a forward detachment, in the vanguard (in a flanking detachment), or it may be within the composition of the regiment's main forces, while a company may operate as an advance march (flank) security unit, or within the composition of the battalion column.

There is extreme diversity in the physico-geographical conditions of the theater of war, in the concrete locale and in the forces, grouping and nature of actions of the enemy.

The Great Patriotic War provided us with instructive examples of night meeting engagements. Today they may become an even more-frequent phenomenon. And despite the greatly increased possibilities tank and motorized rifle subunits now have for conducting meeting engagements at night, it is much more difficult to organize and conduct such engagements than during daylight.

Thus the complexity of the conditions in which a meeting engagement occurs depends on many concrete conditions, and each time this complexity will manifest itself differently.

Changes in the conditions under which the meeting engagement arises and proceeds have naturally affected the meeting engagement's/typical traits /as well.

It is the unanimous opinion that the intensity, dynamism and swiftness of the meeting engagement are typically greater today than in the Great Patriotic War. The meeting engagements fought by formations in the past war lasted 10-20 hours and longer, developing to a depth of 15-25 km (for example the VIII Mechanized Corps, 26-27 June 1941 at Dubno; formations of the 4th Tank Army in the Sandomierz-Silesian operation, 13-14 January 1945 etc.), while the duration and depth of engagements fought by units and subunits were significantly less. Even when a collision was initially unsuccessful, the sides continued their active operations until such time that one of them, having exhausted its combat possibilities, was forced to go over to defense or begin retreat.⁷

But nuclear weapons and other highly destructive resources allow motorized rifle and tank subunits to capitalize quickly on the results of a collision and go over to pursuit or to other forms of combat activities. Concurrently the influence of

the fire duel upon the course and outcome of a meeting engagement has grown. It should be considered in this case, however, that the desired end results of a meeting engagement may be achieved only through the actions of tank and motorized rifle subunits.

The struggle to seize and retain the initiative has grown dramatically more acute in connection with the much greater power and maneuvering potentials of the sides; changes in the situation have become typically faster and more abrupt than in the past, and the time for organizing combat activities has decreased considerably. Combat activities evolve across a broad front, both sides have exposed flanks and gaps between their combat formations, and often the fighting becomes spotty in nature.

Swift approach of the enemy, commitment to combat on the move and deployment into combat formations directly from columns of march while simultaneously joining in combat are inherent to the modern meeting engagement of both tanks and motorized rifle subunits, especially when the latter conduct their actions in infantry combat vehicles.

The growth in the proportion of meeting engagements and their diversity have generated the opinion that they are an independent form of combat. This was asserted in particular in the book "Nuclear Weapons and Development of Tactics." Recently, however, the opinion, fully justified from my point of view, that the meeting engagement is a variant of offensive combat has gained acceptance. This definition was reflected in the Soviet Military Encyclopedia. Despite all of the uniqueness of the meeting engagement's organization and conduct, it remains within the framework of offensive combat.

Changes in the nature of the meeting engagement and in the potentials of the troops have influenced the/nature and content of their missions/. The latter have become more diverse, decisive and deep. The most decisive goal--total defeat of the opponent participating in the meeting engagement--is typical of actions involving the use of nuclear weapons. But the concrete missions of the tank (motorized rifle) subunit depend on the location and role of the engagement and on the evolved situation.

Considering that very frequent and abrupt changes in the situation are inherent to the meeting engagement, it is believed suitable to designate only the immediate objective of the subunits and to determine the direction of subsequent advance. It is pointed out in this case that the immediate objective of a subunit operating within the sector of the main thrust usually consists of defeating the main forces of the enemy subunits opposing it, annihilating or capturing enemy nuclear weapons and fire resources, and taking a line offering advantageous conditions for exploitation of the offensive or defeat of approaching enemy reserves. On the other hand the immediate objective of subunits having the mission of containing the enemy's enveloping forces is recognized to be that of preventing him from striking the flanks and rear with his main forces.⁸

/The efforts of organizing the meeting engagement/are significantly more complex in modern conditions as well. The highly dynamic nature of the actions taken by the sides preparatory to the engagement itself and in the course of commitment to battle

requires that the combat formation of a subunit be agreed upon beforehand, during organization of the march or other actions, in anticipation of a meeting engagement. This is why the point of view, often expressed in the literature of the 1950s and 1960s, that the commander of a vanguard should make his decision for a meeting engagement at the moment his forward security subunits meet the enemy has not been supported by the experience of exercises. On the contrary practice has shown that the idea, the basic foundation of the decision, which can be described as determining the order of deployment and the actions to be taken on meeting the enemy, and determination of the make-up of the columns and the distribution of the men and equipment, must be considered earlier, during the time that the march or other actions preceding the meeting engagement are being organized. Once the meeting engagement starts, the decision made on this foundation is simply adjusted to fit the situation, while in the extreme case it may be altered in accordance with the concrete strength, nature of actions and grouping of the enemy, the particular terrain features and so on. Moreover, this must all be done in literally a few minutes; otherwise it would be impossible to forestall the enemy in deploying and opening fire.

Determining the make-up of the march formation and, on its basis, the combat formation, the commander should rest his decisions on the principle of anticipating the enemy in opening fire and deploying the main forces, while concurrently achieving maximum possible dispersal under the given conditions, with the purpose of gaining protection from mass destruction weapons and of retaining the freedom to maneuver upon commitment to battle. This is why it is important for subunits such as battalions and companies to be sufficiently independent, which in many ways depends on the reinforcements with which they are provided. Thus for example during a number of exercises conducted in summer of 1962, in which the actions taken by subunits to organize for and conduct a meeting engagement were practiced, the motorized rifle battalion was usually reinforced by a tank company, one or two artillery batteries (85-mm guns and 122-mm howitzers), a combat engineer platoon and a chemical and radiological reconnaissance detachment, while a rifle (motorized rifle) company assigned to an advance party was reinforced with a tank platoon, an artillery or mortar battery, a platoon of 57-mm guns and a combat engineer detachment. Later on, this tendency not only persisted but even grew in acceptance.

During one exercise a tank battalion commanded by Major V. Roznbayev, assigned to the vanguard, was reinforced with an artillery battalion, by motorized rifle, combat engineer and ZSU-23-4 platoons and a radiological and chemical reconnaissance detachment. The 8th Tank Company, which was sent ahead of it as an advance party (less a platoon), was reinforced with an artillery battery, a combat engineer platoon and a radiological and chemical reconnaissance detachment.⁹

To anticipate the enemy in opening fire, it is very important to correctly determine the place of artillery in the march formation. One recommendation was to locate artillery in such a way "that it could deploy earlier than the motorized rifle and tank subunits, support their deployment and forestall the enemy in opening fire."¹⁰

Antiaircraft resources attached to a battalion would best be included in the column of its main forces, prepared to open fire at airborne targets while on the move and during short halts.

The success of a meeting engagement depends in many ways upon the timeliness with which information is received on the strength, composition and formation of enemy columns advanced to meet the subunit, on the direction and rate of their movement, on the security provided to their main forces, on lines most advantageous for deployment and so on. Subunits such as tank and motorized infantry battalions should conduct their own reconnaissance for these purposes, for which reason they usually send a fighting and reconnaissance patrol forward on the route of travel.

This is precisely how Major V. Roznbayev structured his combat formation and organized reconnaissance. He sent a fighting and reconnaissance patrol forward along the route of travel. This patrol consisted of a tank platoon reinforced by a motorized rifle detachment. An advance party having the composition indicated above provided security to the main forces.

The main forces of the vanguard were formed in the following order. A patrolling tank was followed by the commander and staff of the battalion, the antiaircraft platoon, the 7th Tank Company together with a motorized rifle detachment, the 9th Tank Company, less a platoon, together with a motorized rifle detachment, an artillery battalion less one battery, and the rear services. A tank platoon from the 9th Tank Company was kept back as the rear party.

When formed up in this way, the vanguard was able to promptly detect the enemy, annihilate his reconnaissance subunits and other small subunits without having to deploy the main forces, quickly deploy the main forces and open artillery fire. At the same time there was also the possibility for assuming different variants of deployment and action in a meeting engagement, which played an important role in the subsequent course of events.

In another case a motorized rifle battalion commanded by Captain Ye. Borisjuk was assigned to the vanguard. It was reinforced by an artillery battalion, a tank company, a ZSU-23-4 platoon, a combat engineer platoon and a radiological and chemical reconnaissance detachment. Considering the unique conditions of the forthcoming march and meeting engagement, the battalion commander reinforced the 1st Motorized Rifle Company, assigned to the advance party, with a tank platoon, an artillery battery, a combat engineer detachment and a radiological and chemical reconnaissance detachment. The battalion staff traveled at the head of the column of the main forces; the staff was followed by a combat engineer platoon less a detachment, then a tank company less a platoon, a ZSU-23-4 platoon less two of the self-propelled automatic antiaircraft guns, a mortar platoon, the 2d Motorized Rifle Company, the 3d Motorized Rifle Company, two self-propelled automatic antiaircraft guns, an artillery battalion less a battery, the battalion's rear services and the rear party.¹¹

Formed up in this way, the battalion was able to successfully repel two raids by the opponent's combat helicopters while on the move, to quickly clear a path through a mined obstruction and, on committing to a meeting engagement, to anticipate the "enemy" battalion in deployment, opening fire and maneuver. This decided the outcome of the battle in favor of Captain Ye. Borisjuk's battalion.

In order that the information received on the enemy could be more complete and timely, it would be desirable for commanders of subunits such as tank and motorized

rifle battalions, especially those acting independently in, for example, the vanguard or the forward detachment, to have a possibility for obtaining data directly from airborne reconnaissance aircraft and from the reconnaissance detachments of units and formations operating within the same sector.

/The actions taken by subunits on committing to a meeting engagement/are the most complex. As was noted earlier, as a rule the meeting engagement of the past war began when reconnaissance and security detachments collided, and the meeting engagement usually assumed the nature of a successive build-up of forces, extended in time, as the meeting engagement developed. Sometimes this "classical" scheme of gradual deployment is followed in today's exercises. But it often means a loss of surprise in the strong initial thrust, and marching in place which excludes the possibility of swift enveloping maneuvers or strong frontal thrusts unexpected by the enemy. In a meeting engagement in which modern weapons are employed, one should not fear an enemy's superior forces, but one should also not act without a plan.

Even anticipation of the enemy in opening fire and deploying must not transform into a goal in itself. It is a means of creating the most advantageous conditions for defeat of an enemy in column of march and consequently unable to completely utilize his possibilities for fire and maneuver.

This is exactly the way Captain I. Buadze's tank battalion, mentioned earlier, acted in the "Zapad-81" exercise. Capitalizing on the fact that the "enemy" column was traveling on a parallel road and had not yet begun deploying, immediately estimating the situation he made his decision and commanded all of his subunits to turn left simultaneously. In an instant the column of march was transformed into a linear combat formation. This made it possible for the tanks and antitank resources to forestall the "enemy" in deploying and opening fire, and to defeat the enemy by a swift, simultaneous attack by all of the battalion's forces.

A different situation evolved in the other case discussed above. The main "enemy" forces, with the exception of artillery, managed to deploy earlier than Major V. Roznbayev's tank battalion. The bulk of the main forces began an attack from the front, while the rest attempted an enveloping maneuver. Capitalizing on this, and on the fact that the artillery battery attached to his advance party had already occupied gun emplacements and opened fire, the battalion commander decided to quickly deploy his main forces under the cover of this artillery fire, and defeat the enemy successively in parts. This he was able to do. The tank companies of the main forces deployed simultaneously, and together with the advance party they made a swift thrust, first against the main forces of the "enemy" battalion and then against the company making the enveloping maneuver.¹² This example revealed with special clarity a typical trait of the meeting engagement--a stubborn struggle to seize and retain the fire initiative, one in which time is reckoned in the minutes and even in the seconds. Because Major V. Roznbayev estimated the true situation very quickly and correctly, because he amplified or, more accurately, even altered his previously adopted decision, and because he implemented it energetically, he was able to forestall the "enemy" in opening artillery fire, and he achieved success in a meeting engagement which started out in favor of the "enemy."

As was noted earlier, during the Great Patriotic War the meeting engagement began with a collision of reconnaissance and security detachments. Aviation, being

essentially the sole means of striking the enemy at significant depth, was rarely used in support of meeting engagements fought by subunits, and it was usually unable to have a significant influence on their outcome. The possibilities of aviation have expanded significantly today. An exceptionally effective resource has appeared--the fire support helicopter. In actions involving the use of nuclear weapons, tank and motorized rifle subunits can and must capitalize on the results of nuclear strikes made against enemy columns on decision and through the resources of senior chiefs, especially at road intersections, various defiles, river crossings and so on.

In turn, the danger of similar strikes by the enemy has grown considerably as well. From this standpoint one of the most dangerous periods is deployment of the main forces of a tank or motorized subunit for a meeting engagement. This requires competent use of antiaircraft weapons attached to the subunit and organization of effective protection against mass destruction weapons. Major V. Roznbayev acted quite correctly when the battalion's main forces began deploying by ordering the attached ZSU-23-4 platoon to provide cover against the airborne "enemy" for the commander's observation post, the center of the battalion's combat formation and the artillery positions.

The experience of the Great Patriotic War very persuasively demonstrated that the success of subunits in a meeting engagement depends significantly on the surprise of their actions (for example the defeat of the German 20th Motorized Division by the VIII Guards Mechanized Corps, 1st Guards Tank Army in a meeting engagement in the vicinity of Chernorudok on 27 December 1943; the actions of many tank and mechanized formations and units in the Vistula-Oder operation). This is even more important today, inasmuch as the enemy's reconnaissance and fighting potentials have risen greatly. The literature has turned its attention to the fact that in the presence of modern reconnaissance resources, it would hardly be possible to conceal the movement of subunits such as a tank (motorized rifle) battalion. Nevertheless, such concealment must always be worked toward, primarily by annihilating reconnaissance subunits on the ground and the enemy's airplanes and helicopters, and by meticulous camouflage and deception, to include signals security and deception. But the main accent began to be placed in the postwar period on deceiving and misleading the enemy in relation to one's actions. This tendency is continually increasing today as well.

The possibilities for dividing an enemy march (combat) formation into isolated parts and quickly defeating the latter are significantly greater in a meeting engagement today. Bold and decisive actions bordering on calculated risks are necessary for this. Because of the greater possibilities for maneuver enjoyed by tank and motorized rifle subunits, they can make bold and deep enveloping maneuvers in a meeting engagement.

But at the same time when the necessity arises for frontal thrusts, which were a relatively rare phenomenon in the past, the greatly increased power of weapons makes their use more effective.

In the course of modern combat, it is very important to prevent the enemy from taking defensive positions during a meeting engagement, from withdrawing and from taking other actions, and to take the appropriate countermeasures. This is why the 1964 Ground Troops Field Manual recommended that if the enemy attempts to go over

to defense, the battalion (company) must prevent his assumption of an advantageous line by fire and decisive actions, it must divide his combat formation and destroy it in parts, and if he initiates a withdrawal, the battalion must immediately go over to pursuit, annihilating his covering subunits by decisive actions, swiftly penetrating his main forces and annihilating him in coordination with subunits engaged in parallel pursuit.¹⁴

In addition to the traditional forms of support to combat activities--the reconnaissance, air defense, camouflage and deception efforts we examined earlier, protection against mass destruction weapons has acquired exceptionally important significance to success in the meeting engagement of the postwar period. Besides sensible dispersal and competent utilization of the protective properties of the terrain, such protection requires organization of radiological and chemical reconnaissance and preparation of the subunits to surmount the consequences of the enemy's nuclear and chemical strikes through their own forces and resources.

It is impossible to examine all problems associated with development of the tactics of the meeting engagement of tank and motorized rifle subunits in the postwar period within a single article. But we can see from this discussion that there are certain basic trends typical of this development: a significant increase in the proportion of meeting engagements, to include at night, within the overall system of combat activities; growth in the complexity and, in comparison with the past, the diversity of the conditions in which meeting engagements arise and of the objective pursued in such engagements; greater swiftness and dynamism; growth in the role of fire strikes and greater intensity of the struggle to seize and retain the fire initiative; reduction of the time available for organizing combat activities, and consequently, growth in the complexity of the work done by commanders and staffs; expansion of the possibilities for maneuver; growth in the role and possibilities of successful frontal thrusts; expansion of the range of support that can be provided to combat activities, to include new forms of support associated with, for example, protection from mass destruction weapons; growth in the role of surprise and concurrent growth in the difficulty of achieving it, and so on.

The development of the tactics of the meeting engagement is complex in nature, and it goes on continuously as weapons and combat equipment develop and as the organizational structure of the troops improves. This requires military personnel to analyze the historical experience more fully and deeply--especially the experience of the Great Patriotic War and the postwar period, and to competently utilize this experience to develop the tactics of the meeting engagement and improve the combat skills of the troops.

FOOTNOTES

1. See Yamanov, A. A., "Vstrechnyy boy" [The Meeting Engagement], Voenizdat, 1959; Loza, D. F., "March i vstrechnyy boy" [The March and the Meeting Engagement], Voenizdat, 1968.
2. "Sovetskaya Voennoye Entsiklopediya" [Soviet Military Encyclopedia], Vol 2, Voenizdat, 1976, pp 407-408.
3. "Sovetskaya Voennoye Entsiklopediya," Vol 2, p 407.

4. See KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, 11 September 1981.
5. "Taktika" [Tactics], Voenizdat, 1966, p 202.
6. Petrus', P. M., Shemanskiy, P. V., and Chul'skiy, N. K., "Yadernoye oruzhiye i razvitiye taktiki" [Nuclear Weapons and Development of Tactics], Voenizdat, 1967, p 155.
7. See "Taktika," p 209.
8. See the article by Colonel I. Konyushenko "The Meeting Engagement" (KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, 17 March 1976).
9. See VOYENNNYY VESTNIK, No 7, 1981, p 14.
10. Article by Colonel A. Sidorenko "The Meeting Engagement" (KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, 27 September 1967).
11. See VOYENNNYY VESTNIK, No 8, 1979, pp 39-41.
12. VOYENNNYY VESTNIK, No 7, 1981, pp 16,17.
14. "Boyevoy ustav Sukhoputnykh voysk (batal'on-rota) [1964 Ground Troops Field Manual (Battalion-Company)], Article 85.

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REVIEW OF BOOK ABOUT WORLD WAR II

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 1, Jan 82 (signed to press 25 Dec 81) pp 76-78

[Book review by Academician I. Mints: "The Collapse of Fascist Aggression"]

[Text] The literature on World War II is vast. The grand epic "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945" [History of the Second World War 1939-1945] stands out especially. Eleven of its twelve volumes have already been published. This work, which generalizes the war experience from a Marxist orientation, is being created by a collective of several hundred scholars specializing in history. But the principal component of World War II--the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union--was the main ingredient of the liberation of mankind from fascism. This greatest of all historical events requires further analysis in relation to both particular issues of the war and the war in general, as well as of the historical role played by different nations and states in the course of World War II and in its final outcome. The literature on the past war has been supplemented by a new monograph by a prominent Soviet historian, USSR Academy of Sciences corresponding member Professor A. M. Samsonov, "The Collapse of Fascist Aggression."* It is a major study, the fruit of many years of labor, based on the fundamental achievements of Soviet historical science, including military history.

The book devotes significant room to revealing the nature of the war. The analysis is based on Lenin's teaching on the causes of wars in the modern era. This approach permitted the author to integrally examine the mutual relationship between war, politics, economics, diplomacy and the moral potential of the warring sides. This work persuasively demonstrates that international imperialism was to blame for World War II, attempting to annihilate the world's first socialist state within its flames. But because there was conflict within the imperialist world, the war began within the capitalist camp itself, with fascist Germany's attack on Poland. A policy of encouraging the fascist invaders, followed for many years by England, France, the USA and their allies, pursued the goal of directing the aggression of the fascist bloc against the USSR, but it ended in failure. Germany, Italy and Japan capitalized on the connivance of these countries to establish their own domination over other nations (p 23).

*Samsonov, A. M., "Krakh fashistskoy agressii 1939-1945. Istoricheskiy ocherk" [The Collapse of Fascist Aggression 1939-1945. A Historical Outline], 2d Edition, revised and supplemented, Moscow, Nauka, 1980, 728 pp.

The Soviet Union was the sole state which consistently and persistently fought fascism and the threat of a new war. The book revealed the measures taken by the Communist Party and the Soviet government to bridle fascist aggression against China, Ethiopia, Spain, Austria and Czechoslovakia and to render all possible assistance to the sacrifices to aggression.

The author's illumination of the Anglo-Franco-Soviet (Moscow) talks in summer 1939 is interesting. The scuttling of negotiations by the Anglo-French ruling circles, which persisted in their policy of appeasing the aggressors, meant that the possibility of averting war was lost. Discussing this situation, the author uses the testimony of contemporary English historians who were compelled to conclude, on the basis of declassified documents from the state archives of Great Britain, that there had been a possibility for preventing the war. "What was required for this," the book points out, "was for the Chamberlain government to understand the truth that were England, France and the USSR to unite, they could have averted the disaster, since Hitler would not have risked armed conflict with major powers on two fronts" (pp 35-36). The reactionary circles of England, France and the USA bided their time until fascist Germany attacked the USSR, but then, the continued existence of these countries themselves turned out to be directly dependent on the USSR's capability for enduring and winning in the struggle against fascist aggression, which is why the anti-Hitler coalition was created.

The author correctly notes that the Soviet Union's entry into the Second World War was the main factor responsible for the transformation of World War II into a war of liberation on the part of the forces fighting against the fascist-militarist bloc (p 191). The work validly notes that the long and hard road to victory over the aggressors lay through armed conflict on the Soviet-German front, the principal front of World War II. The titanic struggle of the Soviet people against fascist aggression predetermined the course and outcome of the war, and it was the decisive factor responsible for ridding mankind of the threat of fascist enslavement. The book demonstrates the enormous amount of work done by the Communist Party, the Soviet government and the supreme organs of the armed conflict's conduct, and their political, economic, ideological, diplomatic military activities. It thoroughly illuminates the initial period of the Great Patriotic War and the failure of the blitzkrieg.

A significant amount of room is devoted to the battle of Moscow, which marked the beginning of a fundamental turning point, and to the battles of Stalingrad and Kursk, which were the culmination of this fundamental turning point in the course of the Great Patriotic War and of World War II as a whole. The author's analysis of a large amount of factual material provides a possibility for demonstrating the advantages of Soviet art of war over the art of war of fascist Germany. The brilliant victories at Moscow and especially at Stalingrad, with the former attained against a superior enemy and the latter won against approximately equal forces, are a persuasive confirmation of this.

The organic interaction of war and politics is revealed well in chapters and sections devoted to the mission of liberation of the Soviet Armed Forces, which completely or partially liberated the territories of 12 European and Asian countries as a result of the Belorussian, Iasi-Kishinev, Petsamo-Kirkenes, Vistula-Oder, Budapest, Belgrade, East Prussian, Berlin and Prague and later the Manchurian operations of the Soviet Army and Navy. This unprecedented struggle against German

fascism and Japanese militarism by the USSR promoted growth of the national liberation movement of the peoples of the world.

The book gives a rather complete discussion of the operations of the Western allies in World War II. It persuasively demonstrates that the Soviet Union, which guided itself by Lenin's fundamental tenet that a possibility existed for "military treaties with one imperialist coalition against another in the event that such a treaty could, without disturbing the foundations of Soviet power, strengthen the position of the Soviet Union and paralyze an attack upon it by any imperialist power,"* played the leading role in creation and reinforcement of the anti-Hitler coalition.

The political aims of the Soviet Union and its real contribution to the defeat of fascist aggressors differed in many ways from the political aims and contribution made by the rest of the members of the anti-Hitler coalition. The Soviet Union was always faithful to its duty to the Allies, and it fulfilled its obligations without fail. The governments of the USA and England tried to gain one-sided advantages; they postponed fulfilling a number of important decisions to which they had agreed, as is well evident in the example of the opening of a second front. Nevertheless, military and political cooperation among the Allied powers in the joint struggle against fascism did lead to victory. The anti-Hitler coalition demonstrated broad possibilities for mutual understanding among states with different social structures in an effort to achieve common vitally important goals.

Let us add a few words about the evaluation given to the plan for Operation Sledge Hammer drawn up by the USA in the beginning of 1942 (p 254). The operation foresaw "early invasion of France" in the event of "a dramatic worsening in the status of the Soviet-German front in spring-summer 1942 or, on the other hand, *a critical weakening of Germany*" (italics mine--Author). I believe that neither the first nor the second situation was the principal cause of the birth of this plan, in which we can discern the first signs of a fear of the Soviet Union's possible liberation of European countries enslaved by the fascists. There are American archival documents attesting to the fact that in 1943 General D. Marshall, chief of staff of the U.S. Army, raised the following question for discussion at the Combined Anglo-American Committee of the Joint Chiefs of Staff: "Would the Germans not assist" in a landing of Western allies in France with the purpose of "pushing the Russians back"? One of the most influential ministers of Churchill's government, Lord Beaverbrook, declared at the end of 1941 that the resistance of the Russians "had created an almost revolutionary situation in all occupied countries..." (p 207).

The author's point of view on the reasons behind the "stop order" which resulted in the beginning of the evacuation of units of the British Expeditionary Force from Dunkirk (1940) is debatable. The order, the book states, was based "not on political design but on military failure" (p 70). I think that this opinion is not altogether accurate. Both political and military causes did have their place here. The extremely well informed English author F. Winterbottom, who forwards interesting arguments, proves that after France was finished off for practical purposes, Hitler "obviously attempted to conclude a peace with the West before

*Lenin, V. I., "Poln. sobr. soch." [Complete Collected Works], Vol 36, p 323.

embarking on his 'great mission'...of annihilating Communist Russia.** He considered in this case that "were the expeditionary force to be locked away in a prisoner-of-war camp..., this could threaten a peace settlement...that could be wrested from the English."**

The book's lack of a chapter on the results and lessons of World War II and its principal part--the Great Patriotic War--somewhat reduces the theoretical level of the study. Such a voluminous work should have had a section titled "The Communist Party--Organizer and Inspiration of the Soviet People's Victories in the War." This would have made it possible to more broadly demonstrate the leading role our Communist Party played in World War II and in its victorious conclusion.

Examining the combat activities of troops of the Southwestern and Stalingrad fronts aimed at encircling the enemy, forming inner and outer fronts and repelling attempts at break-outs, the author should have described the role played by troops of the Don Front in the counteroffensive following annihilation of Field Marshal Paulus' grouping at Stalingrad.

Special mention should be made of the historiographical part of the epilogue, which contains a critical review of bourgeois literature (predominantly West German), about which the author makes some valuable generalizations. But his discussion centers mainly on literature of the 1950s. More than 15 years ago, the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, CPSU Central Committee offered its first expanded evaluation of the world literature on this problem.*** In the intervening period, many new books on World War II have appeared in practically all countries of the world. Their analysis requires a special effort, as does the need for fundamentally exposing bourgeois, reformist and Maoist falsifiers of history. It would be expedient to unite the efforts of scientists, historians, economists, philosophers and others to complete this highly complex task.

"The time which moves us farther and farther away from the war years," said L. I. Brezhnev, "allows us to more deeply and fully evaluate the immortal heroism of soldiers who accepted death in behalf of life, in behalf of the liberty, independence and honor of the beloved motherland, in behalf of socialism."****

On the whole, however, the book reviewed here is a definite contribution to Soviet historiography of the Great Patriotic War.

*Winteler-Bischoff, F., "Operatsiya 'Ul'tra'" [Operation Ultra], translated from English, Voenizdat, 1978, p 54.

**Ibid.

***"Istoriya Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny 1941-1945" [History of the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945], Vol 6, Voenizdat, 1965.

****Brezhnev, L. I., "Velikiy podvig sovetskogo naroda" [The Great Heroism of the Soviet People], Moscow, Politizdat, 1975, p 11.

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REVIEW OF FIRST VOLUME OF NEW HISTORY OF THE CIVIL WAR

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 1, Jan 82 (signed to press 25 Dec 81) pp 79-81

[Book review by Professor and Doctor of Historical Sciences Col (Ret) S. Lipitskiy: "A New Work on the History of the Civil War"]

[Text] The first volume of "The Civil War in the USSR" has been published.* It examines methodological, military-political and military-historical problems in accordance with the overall plan, aims and tasks declared in the Introduction. This publication analyzes the struggle of the Soviet republic against imperialist intervention and internal counterrevolution. Its novelty lies in illumination of the events of the Civil War on the basis of the works of V. I. Lenin, documents of the Communist Party and published and archival sources released to the scientific community in the last 20 years. Many of them are published here for the first time.

Also very important is the fact that much attention in the work "is devoted to the military factor, to the armed struggle..." (p 8). The experience of defending the achievements of Great October permits revelation of general laws and unique features of the revolutionary and national liberation wars of the modern era.

The reader will find his attention attracted to the first chapter--"The Classicists of Marxism-Leninism on Civil Wars." Concise statement of the problem and its thorough illumination are a new step in the study of the military legacy of the founders of scientific communism. The viewpoints of Marx, Engels and Lenin on the essence, features and nature of civil wars and on their role in the class struggle of the proletariat are demonstrated in their historical perspective. A special section reproduces Lenin's analysis of the basic features of civil wars in the era of imperialism and proletarian revolutions, and it describes the most important laws of wars fought in the defense of the achievements of the socialist revolution.

Unfortunately this section does contain some incorrect statements. Thus p 20 reads: "The number of colonial wars increased as a result of the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution and especially following the defeat of fascism in World War II." This interpretation contradicts the truth.

*"Grazhdanskaya voyna v SSSR v dvukh tomakh" [The Civil War in the USSR, in Two Volumes], Volume 1, "Suppression of Internal Counterrevolution. Failure of Overt Intervention by International Imperialism (October 1917--March 1919)," Voenizdat, 1980, 368 pp.

An unfortunate mistake is made on p 24, where it says that in 1917, V. I. Lenin supposedly believed "the defeat of imperialist governments, and mainly the Russian Provisionary Government to be the most effective way to transform the war from an imperialist one into a civil war. The inaccuracy of this statement is twofold. First of all the Bolshevik party, led by V. I. Lenin, consistently pursued a policy of taking state power over the soviets from the hands of the Provisionary Government by peaceful means in March-June 1917 (in the period of dual power). Second, throughout the entire period from March to October 1917, the Bolsheviks never suggested beating "their" (that is, the Provisionary) government. After all, Lenin said quite categorically: "We were the beaten ones in the time of the Tsar, but we were never so under Tsereteli and Chernov*."**

The chapter "Historiography of the Civil War in the USSR" deserves a high evaluation. Its presence itself is one of the positive features of this publication. It persuasively attests to a scientific approach by the author collective to analysis and illumination of the events of the Civil War. It successively traces the basic directions and achievements of Soviet historiography, which doubtlessly facilitates reaching the right orientation to the topic.

The second part of this chapter is also valuable, being a definite contribution by military historians to fulfillment of the CPSU Central Committee's demand of "promptly offering a worthy repulse to the ideological diversions of imperialism and its accomplices."*** The authors did the right thing when they concentrated their attention on analyzing, criticizing and exposing modern bourgeois conceptions distorting the causes, nature, course and outcome of the Civil War and the aims and scale of the intervention in 1918-1922. In this case the resounding criticism of bourgeois "Sovietologists" is combined with an exposé of the insidious methods they use to falsify history.

The volume's subsequent chapters are devoted to the events which occurred between October 1917 and February 1919. Making broad use of published sources and archival documents, the author collective revealed the concrete historical situation and the course and outcome of engagements and battles fought by Soviet troops against the counterrevolutionary forces, during the Kerensky-Krasnovskiy revolt and in the period of struggle against the (Kaledintsy), (Dutovtsy), WhiteCossacks and the Ukrainian Central Rada. But the lack of brief conclusions on these battles makes these chapters incomplete.

Contradictory information about the same events is encountered in the volume. Thus p 84 reads: "On 19 January Taganrog was liberated by a joint attack by Red Guards and rebelling laborers." But on p 343 we read something else: "January 28. The defeat of the Kaledintsy at Taganrog and Kamenskiy. Our troops captured Taganrog." Orenburg was even less "lucky." It is asserted on p 342 that it was liberated on 5 January 1918, while according to pp 88 and 343 it was liberated on 18 January, and according to p 218 it was liberated on 31 January.

*I. G. Tsereteli, a Menshevik, and V. M. Chernov a Social-Revolutionary, were ministers of the Provisionary Government.

**Lenin, V. I., "Poln. sobr. soch." [Complete Collected Works], Vol 36, p 114.

***"On Further Improvement of Ideological Work and Political Indoctrination. CPSU Central Committee Decree, 26 April 1979," Moscow, Politizdat, 1979, p 9.

The struggle of the Soviet republic against the German invaders is thoroughly illuminated in chapters 4, 7 and 8. This is perhaps the first time the high effectiveness of the strategy worked out by the Central Committee is so clearly shown. This strategy was a flexible combination of all-out development of the insurrectional movement and other forms of resistance to the invaders on territory seized by them on one hand, and achievement of an agreement between the Soviet government and the masses of the German soldiers on the other. The latter was based on principles declared by the October Revolution, "which are in keeping with fraternal relationships between laborers of all countries and nations...."

Noting the high ideological and scientific level at which the struggle against German anti-Soviet aggression is discussed, we cannot ignore certain omissions. As an example an analysis of the methods of armed conflict is lacking, though the course of the combat activities is described with excessive detail. A statement by V. I. Lenin defining the events of the week from 18 to 24 February 1918 as representing one of the greatest turning points of history, as "a bitter, insulting, hard but necessary, useful and beneficial lesson" is cited on pp 110-111. Inasmuch as this statement by Lenin is often cited in our literature on the Civil War, and because arbitrary interpretations of this statement can be found in some publications, it would have been suitable to define the essence of the historical turning point noted by Lenin and to reveal the content of this hard but necessary lesson.

The beginning of the Entente's intervention and the progress of the military actions on the fronts are examined in chapters 5, 6 and 9. These chapters reveal the counterrevolutionary, predatory essence of the anti-Soviet intervention organized by imperialists of the Entente.

Data on the manifestations of international solidarity by laborers of the entire world with the heroic struggle of the Soviet Union are important and new in many ways.

The correct evaluation given by the authors to the aims and plans of imperialists of the Entente and of German militants, White Guards, bourgeois nationalists and other reactionary forces aligned with them is supplemented successfully by a description of the acute contradictions existing within the anti-Soviet camp. The great significance of measures implemented by the Bolshevik party and the Soviet government to transform the country into a single military camp becomes especially noticeable on this historical background.

CPSU Central Committee General Secretary L. I. Brezhnev pointed out at the 26th CPSU Congress that the Soviet people expect, from the mass media, "not only truthful and efficient presentation of the facts but also their deep analysis and serious generalization."** It should be noted in this connection that the great amount of facts gathered by the authors were not always used to make the appropriate generalizations, evaluations and conclusions. As an example, after informing us of the important historical fact that in 1918 the Soviet republic "found itself in a fiery ring of fronts," the authors failed to underscore the special

*"Dokumenty vneshney politiki SSSR" [Documents of USSR Foreign Policy], Vol 1, Moscow, Politizdat, 1957, p 566.

**"Materialy XXVI s"yezda KPSS" [Proceedings of the 26th CPSU Congress], Moscow, Politizdat, 1981, p 76.

significance of carefully defining the main danger, of competently selecting the axis of the main strike and of appropriately concentrating the men and equipment for this strike. Nor was the question as to why and when the Eastern Front became the main front clearly illuminated (p 179).

Much room is devoted in chapters 4 and 6 to a description of the course of the combat activities. The text is overburdened with statistics, with lists of lines and small population centers, but there are no diagrams and maps in the first volume which would help to clarify the operational-tactical significance of these lines and centers.

The large number of footnotes referring the reader to other works makes the reading difficult as well. Just on pp 218-219 alone there are 14 footnotes recommending 13 books, many of which can be found only in specialized libraries. Typically, the reader is also asked to acquaint himself with the principles followed by the author collective in breaking down the different periods in the history of the Civil War in the USSR by inspecting a collection of articles that was published 7 years ago in just 4,300 copies. Nor is the terminology standardized. Thus the stages and periods of the Red Army's development are referred to as: "The first stage of the Red Army's development" (p 98), "the voluntary period" (p 143), "the new stage of construction" (p 170). This variability is no accident. It attests to absence of standard criteria for breaking down the Civil War into different periods.

The need for instituting compulsory universal military service is not explained entirely accurately either: "Because of the narrowness of the recruitment base (laborers and peasants only), the volunteer principle of manning the Red Army could not serve as the basis for a mass army" (p 170). The groundlessness of this opinion is obvious. After all, the name itself of the Workers' and Peoples' Red Army expressed the essence of the class principle behind its manning. Moreover Article 19 of the first RFSFR Constitution established: "The Soviet republic...establishes universal compulsory military service. The honorable right to defend the revolution with weapon in hand is granted only to the laborers...."*

The description of the rights and powers of the commander in chief and the chairman of the Republic Revolutionary Military Council should have been based on the "Decree of the Council of People's Commissars Announcing the Statute on the Commander in Chief to All Armed Forces of the Republic," signed by V. I. Lenin on 5 December 1918. It states that the commander in chief receives orders only from the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, the Council of People's Commissars and the Republic Revolutionary Military Council, and that he is answerable only to these organs.** It should also have been based on the decree published on 25 December 1918 by the RKP(b) Central Committee, "On the Policy of the Military Department," which states that all policy of the military department "is managed on the basis of a precise foundation consisting of the general directives issued

*"Konstitutsiya obshchenarodnogo gosudarstva" [Constitution of the Whole People's State], Moscow, Politizdat, 1978, p 201.

**"Direktivy glavnogo komandovaniya Krasnoy Armii (1917-1920)" [Directives of the Red Army Main Command (1917-1920)], Voenizdat, 1969, pp 140-141.

in behalf of the party by its Central Committee and under its direct control."*
There are some other shortcomings as well.

On the whole, however, the author collective of the work "The Civil War in the USSR" did a great deal of useful work, concentrating, on the pages of the volume reviewed here, an abundance of concrete historical facts gleaned from archival documents and from a broad range of other sources. This work is continuing. Today, in a time when preparations are being made for publication of the second and last volume of the work, the author collective has all possibilities for utilizing the accumulated experience, developing the positive aspects of the first volume and generalizing the unfadingly significant lessons of the heroic struggle to consolidate the achievements of Great October fought by the laborers of the young Republic of the Soviets under the leadership of the Communist Party.

*"KPSS o Vooruzhennykh Silakh Sovetskogo Soyuza. Dokumenty. 1917-1968" [The CPSU on the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union. Documents. 1917-1968], Voenizdat, 1969, p 35.

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON ARMY GENERAL SHCHEGLOV

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 1, Jan 82 (signed to press 25 Dec 81) pp 90-92

[Article by Doctor of Military Sciences Col Gen V. Druzhinin: "Army General A. F. Shcheglov (On His 70th Birthday)"]

[Text] The Communist Party of the Soviet Union has nurtured remarkable military chiefs under whose direct participation the glorious victories of the Great Patriotic War were forged and major transformations were made in the Soviet Armed Forces in the postwar period. Among them is Hero of the Soviet Union Army General Afanasiy Fedorovich Shcheglov.

A. F. Shcheglov was born on 15 January 1912 in the village of Mikhali, presently in Oleninskiy Rayon, Kalininskaya Oblast. In 1929 he volunteered for the Combined Military School imeni VTsIK and graduated from it in 1933. He commanded a platoon and a battery.

In 1936 he entered the Military Academy imeni M. V. Frunze, and in 1939 he graduated from it with honors. Then he served as chief of staff of an artillery regiment and as a deputy division chief of the operations department of an army staff, within the composition of which he took part in the Soviet-Finnish war. In that same year, 1939, an important event occurred in Afanasiy Fedorovich's life: He became a member of the Communist Party.

Captain A. F. Shcheglov was in the Northern Front when the Great Patriotic War began. He was serving in the operations department of the frontal staff. In August 1941 he was appointed commander of an antitank artillery regiment, and then of a skiing rifle regiment. He participated actively in defensive battles at the approaches to Leningrad, and he fought in the enemy rear in the Volkhov-Lyuban' sector. Within 4 months the skiing regiment under Major A. F. Shcheglov's command made six raids on enemy rear services, covering a distance of many kilometers to make bold lightning strikes wherever the enemy least expected. And whenever the situation became difficult, the skiers could always see their commander in the most dangerous places--indefatigable, courageous, decisive and bold.

In June 1942 Afanasiy Fedorovich was appointed deputy chief of the operations department of the staff of the Leningrad Front. In April 1943 he was given the command of the 63d Guards Rifle Division. Afanasiy Fedorovich took part in the

battle of Leningrad. In the Leningrad-Novgorod operation he competently commanded the units of the division, which was in the assault echelon of the Leningrad Front's attack troop grouping, during penetration of highly fortified enemy defenses in the Narva sector, during exploitation of the offensive, during the crossing of the Narva River, and in the capture and expansion of the bridgehead on its west bank. For its successes in combat, the division was awarded the Order of the Red Banner and the Krasnosel'skaya honorary title, and its commander, Colonel A. F. Shcheglov, was awarded the Hero of the Soviet Union title for competent command of the units in battles against the enemy and for the heroism he displayed. Soon the line officer became a general.

In June 1944 the 63d Guards Krasnosel'skaya Red Banner Rifle Division was given an honorable mention in an order from the Supreme Commander in Chief and awarded the Order of Lenin for distinction in penetrating highly reinforced, deeply disposed permanent enemy defenses on the Karelian Isthmus. In September 1944 the division was once again given an honorable mention in an order from the Supreme Commander in Chief, this time for successful actions within the composition of the Leningrad Front--during penetration of highly reinforced enemy defenses and defeat of enemy troops on the territory of the Estonian SSR. The successes of the formation led by General A. F. Shcheglov were the result of the commander's high tactical proficiency and his ability to artfully plan combat, to meticulously prepare for an offensive, to achieve decisiveness in actions and to firmly and continually control subordinated units.

Afanasiy Fedorovich greeted Victory Day in the Latvian SSR in the XXX Guards Rifle Corps, which he had commanded since October 1944. This corps took part in the defeat of the enemy's Kurlyandskiy grouping.

Following the Great Patriotic War Afanasiy Fedorovich served as commander of a rifle corps, he studied in the Military Academy of the General Staff, and he graduated from it in 1948 with a gold medal. From 1949 on, Afanasiy Fedorovich held important positions in the National Air Defense Forces. His high awareness of his responsibility to the party and the Soviet people, his profound knowledge and his diverse practical experience raised Afanasiy Fedorovich to the status of the prominent leaders of the National Air Defense Forces. In August 1959 he was appointed troop commander of the Baku Antiaircraft District, and in July 1966 he was appointed first deputy commander in chief of the National Air Defense Forces. In April 1974 Army General A. F. Shcheglov assumed an executive role in the work of the Warsaw Pact Combined Arms Forces.

In all of his important positions, Afanasiy Fedorovich displays the energy characteristic of him, he generously shares his tremendous combat experience in command and staff work, and he does everything he can to train and indoctrinate the troops. He was elected deputy to the sixth through eighth convocations of the USSR Supreme Soviet, and a delegate to the 23d CPSU Congress.

The motherland gave a high evaluation to A. F. Shcheglov's deeds. He was awarded the Hero of the Soviet Union title, four orders of Lenin, three orders of the Red Banner, the orders of Suvorov 2d Degree, Aleksandr Nevskiy, the Patriotic War 1st Degree, the Red Labor Banner, the Red Star, "For Service to the Motherland in the USSR Armed Forces," 3d Degree and many medals, as well as orders and medals of foreign states.

On his 70th birthday, Afanasiy Fedorovich's friends wish him good health, long life and further successes in strengthening the defense capabilities of our motherland and the battleworthiness of the Warsaw Pact Combined Armed Forces.

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